

RELIGION
OUR C. P. Disputers
TRUE INTEREST:
OR PRACTICAL
NOTES
UPON
The Third Chapter of
MALACHY,
THE
Sixteen, Seventeen and Eighteen
VERSES.

Seasonable for the Times.

By THOMAS WATSON, sometimes
Minister of Stephens Walbrook, Lond.

PROV. 14. 27.

The Fear of the Lord is a Fountain of Life.

LONDON,

Printed by J. Astwood, for Tho. Parkhurst, at
the Bible and Three Crowns, at the lower end of
Cheap-side, near Mercers-Chappel. 1682.

1401012192

100

1211111111

1111111111

1111111111

1111111111

1111111111

1111111111

1111111111

1111111111



TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,

BOOKS are the Children of the Brain. In this Writing Age* (ferè ^{* Eccles;} 12. 12. ad nauseam) I intended my Pen should have been silent, but the variety and Weightiness of this Subject, as also the desire
A 3 of

To the Reader.

of some Friends did prevail with me to Publish it. The main design of this excellent Scripture, is to encourage Solid Piety, and confute the Atheists of the World, who imagine there is no gain in Godliness. It was the Speech of King Saul to his Servants, 1 Sam. 22. 7. Will the Son of Jesse give every one of you Fields and Vineyards? Will the World or mens Lusts give them such noble Recompences of Reward, as God bestows upon his Followers? Surely, it is Holiness carries away the Garland. As for this Treatise, it comes abroad in a plain

To the Reader.

plain dress : Truth like a Di-
 amond Shines brightest in its na-
 tive Lustre ; Saint Paul came not
 to the Corinthians καὶ ὑπεροχὴν λόγου
 with excellency of Speech * * 2 Cor.
 or the Pride of Oratory † ; His 1. 1.
 Study was not to Court, but † Mundi
 Convert. It is an unhap- facundi-
 piness that in these Luxuriant am non
 times , Religion should for the vendita-
 most part run either into No- vit. Vor-
 tion or Ceremony ; The Spi- stins.
 rits of Religion are evaporated.
 When Knowledge is turned into
 Taste, and digested into Practice,
 then it is Saving. That God
 would accompany these few im-
 polite Lines, with the Opera-
 A 4 tion

To the Reader.

*tion and Benediction of his holy
Spirit, and make them edify-
ing, is the Prayer of him who
is*

Thine in all Christian Service,

Dowgate,
Nov. 22.
1681.

Thomas Watson.



THE
TABLE
ALPHABETICAL.

A

A <i>Users of Gods Jewels Punished.</i>	pag. 181
<i>Afflictions have their Consolations.</i>	p. 227
<i>Apostacy dangerous</i>	p. 8
<i>Appearance of sin to be shunned.</i>	p. 47
<i>Arguments to hold fast Integrity in evil times.</i>	p. 7
<i>Assurance and the Fear of God consistent.</i>	p. 21
<i>Best</i>	

The Table.

B

Best need Sparing. p. 202
Bodies of the Saints shall be perfect. p. 192

C

Carnal Fear evil. p. 14
Christians instead of speaking one to another, speak one of another. p. 89
Comfort when God saith, Ye are mine. p. 171
Covenant Union with God to be endeavoured. p. 172

D

Day of Judgment, how far to be feared by a Child of God. p. 71
Day of making up Gods Jewels. p. 190
Death how far to be feared by a Child of God. p. 67
Different carriage of God towards his Children and the Wicked. p. 134
Evil

The Table.

E

E vil Thoughts are Punishable in Gods Court.	p. 111
Excellency of the Fear of God.	p. 29
Eyes of Sinners at present shut.	p. 209

F

F ear of God Described.	p. 15
Fear of God is by a Trope put for all Religion.	ibid.
Fear of God makes us Fear Sin.	p. 45
Fearing God and keeping his Command- ments Conjoyned.	p. 54
Fear of God, how to be attained.	p. 80
Fear of missing Heaven.	p. 78
Folly of Idolaters.	p. 136
Friends may be forgetful, but God will not.	p. 150

G

G OD deals with his Saints, as a Fa- ther with his Son.	p. 195
God deals well with his People when he Afflicts them.	p. 217 God

The Table.

God takes notice of the Good in his Children.	p. 130
Gods hearkning to us should make us hearken to him.	p. 138
God hath a Book of Remembrance for his People.	p. 140
Gods owning of his People.	p. 161
Gods Sparing them.	p. 201
Good Conference to be used.	p. 82
Graces of the Saints shall be perfect.	p. 191

H

H asty Words shew the Devil to be in the Tongue.	p. 87
Hearts Deceit.	p. 62
Heart not to be hardened against God.	p. 156
Helps to good Discourse.	p. 100
Helps to holy Thoughts.	p. 127
Hell, how far to be Feared by a Believer.	p. 73
Honour attends Holiness.	p. 174

I

I dle Talk Censured,	p. 85
Incitements to holy Thoughts.	p. 114
Ingredients into the Fear of God.	p. 16
Integri-	

The Table.

Integrity to be preserved Inviolable. p. 3
Jovial Sinners reprov'd. p. 25

M

M *Aking up of Gods Jewels, what it
implys.* p. 185
*Maintain honourable Thoughts of God in
Affliction.* p. 231
Matter of our Holy Musings. p. 113
Means to be good in evil times. p. 9
Mercies of God to be Recorded. 149
Murmuring a God-provoking Sin. p. 87

N

N *Ame of God, what it signifies.* p. 103

O

O *Aths weigh heavy in Gods Balance.* p. 89
Omniscieny of God to be admired. p. 132

P

P *Riviledges of being in Covenant with
God.* p. 165
Reasons

The Table.

R

R *Easons enforcing the Fear of God.*
p. 19

S

S *Aints should be sparing in their Cen-
sures of others.* p. 205
Saints have Gods Ear. p. 134
Saints Purgatory is in this Life. p. 144
Saints Gods Jewels. p. 175
Saints should shine as Jewels. p. 183
Satans Snares p. 59
Scoffers the vilest of Sinners. p. 28
Secure Sinners Characterized. p. 27
Serve God as a Son doth his Father. p. 203
Signs of the Fear of God. p. 45
Signs of such as shall goe to Hell. p. 74
Silence in Religion a loud sin. p. 85
Sinful compliance sordid. p. 5
Sin worse than Affliction. p. 46
Sin begins in the Thoughts. p. 109
Sinners have not right thoughts of God. p. 107
Sinners shall not be spared. p. 203
*Sins of the Wicked written down in Gods
Book of Remembrance.* p. 146
Snares

The Table.

Swasives to holy Conference.

p. 94

T

T *Hinking of God in a right manner.*

p. 125

Thoughts of God maybe Peccant.

p. 124

Thoughts and good Speeches of the Godly are Written down.

p. 140

Time of Discerning between the Righteous and the Wicked.

p. 210

V

V *Ain Thoughts the froth of the Brain.*

p. 108

Vain thoughts Pernitions.

p. 109

Union of the Saints at last.

p. 189

W

W *Ant of the Fear of God the cause of all sin.*

p. 22

Wicked men Vile in Gods account.

p. 178

Wisdom to engage the Lord of Hosts on our side.

p. 158

Works of Mercy.

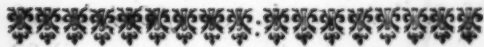
p. 57

ERRA-



ERRATA.

Page 85. line 25. for *no*, read *not*. Pag. 155. marg.
3 *Use*, dele 3. Pag. 188. l. 15, for *discords* r. *discord*.



MALACH. III. Ver. 16, 17, &c.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name. And they shall be mine (saith the Lord of Hosts) in that day when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own Son that serveth him, &c.

*Shewing, that Christians should hold fast
their Integrity in times of defection.*

THE *Scripture of Truth**, is the * Dan. 10.
Ground of Faith. This Por- 21.
tion of Scripture which now
presents it self to our view, hath its
Sacred Elegancies, and is *all glorious*
B *within.*

מלאכי *

within. It was composed by *Malachy*, whose name imports *Messenger* * ; he came upon an Ambassage from the God of Heaven. This Prophet was so famous, that *Origen* and others (though injudiciously) supposed him to be an Angel. He lived after the building of the second Temple, and was *συγγενο*s, contemporary with *Haggai*, and *Zechariah* †.

† Drusus.

This blessed Prophet did *lift up his voice like a Trumpet*, and tell the Jewish Nation of their sins ; and he was the last Trumpet that sounded in the Old Testament. In the words of the Text are these parts.

I. A Character of the Godly.

1. In General, they were Fearers of God ; *they that feared the Lord.*
2. In Special :

(1) *They spake often one to another.*

(2) *They thought upon Gods Name.*

II. The Good Effects of their Piety.

1. The Lord regarded it ; *he hearkened and heard.*

2. He recorded it ; *a book of remembrance was written.*

3. He rewarded it ; and this reward consisted in three things.

(1) Gods owning them ; *they shall be mine.*

(2) Gods

(2) Gods Honouring them; *in that day when I make up my Jewels.*

(3) Gods Sparing them. *I will spare them as a man spareth his own Son that serveth him.*

Before I come to the several parts distinctly, here is a connexive particle stands in the front of the Text which may not be omitted, namely, the word *Then.*

Then they that feared the Lord, &c. *Nihil erat integrum neque in sacerdotibus, neque in vulgo, laxis quasi habitibus in omni genere scelerum grassati fuerant.* Calvin.

Then, that is, after *Israels* return from the Babylonish Captivity; *then*, when the major part of the people grew corrupt, and came worse out of the Furnace than they went in, *vers.* 13, 14 *. *in this bad juncture of time, then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.* Hence observe,

That the Profaneness of the times should not *slacken* but *highten* our zeal. The looser others are, the stricter we should be. In those degenerate times when men were arrived at the *acme* and height of Impudence, and durst speak Treason against Heaven; *then* they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. When others were *Plaintiffs* these were *Defendants*; when

B 2

others

others spake against God, these spake for God.

In *Noah's* dayes all Flesh had corrupted it self, (the old World was drowned in sin before it was drowned in water :) now at this time, *Noah was perfect in his Generation, and Noah walked with God*, Gen. 6. 9. He was the Phoenix of his age. *Athanasius* stood up in the defence of the Truth, when the World was turned *Arrian**. The more outrageous others are in Sin, the more courageous we should be for Truth. When the Atheists said, 'tis *Vain to serve God*, Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.

* *Iste vir totius orbis impetum sustinuit.*

Quest. Why should we be holiest in evil Times.

Answ. 1. Because of the divine Injunction. God chargeth us to be *singular*, Mat. 5. 47. to be *circumspect*, Eph. 5. 15. to be separate from Idolaters, 2 Cor. 6. 17. to *shine as Lights in the World*, Philip. 2. 15. He forbids us to symbolize with Sinners, or doe as they doe : the way to Hell is a *beaten road*, the Lord calls to us to turn out of the road, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil**. This is reason enough to keep our selves pure in a time of common Infecti-

* *οἱ πλείους οὐκ ἔτι.* Bias.

Infection. As Gods Word is our Rule, so his Will is our Warrant.

2. To be holiest in evil times is an Indication of the truth of Grace. To profess Religion when the times favour it, is no Great matter. Who almost will not court the Queen of the Gospel when she is hung with Jewels? but to own the wayes of God when they are decried and maligned, to love a persecuted truth, this evidenceth a vital Principle of Goodness. Dead Fish swim down the stream, living Fish swim against it. To swim against the common stream of evil shews Grace to be alive. The Prophet *Elias* continuing zealous for the Lord of Hosts, when they had digged down Gods Altars, 1 *King*. 19. 10. shewed his heart and lips had been touched with a Coal from the Altar.

1 Use. See hence how unworthy they are of the Name of Christians who use sinful compliance, and cut the Garment of their Religion according to the Mode and fashion of the times. They consult not what is *best*, but what is *safest* *. Complying spirits can truckle to the humours of others; they can

* Non quâ eundum sed qua itur.

bow either to the *East* or to the *Host* ; they prefer a whole Skin before a pure Conscience. They can with the Planet *Mercury* vary their motion ; they can as the Mariner shift their Sail with every wind : and as the Mungril *Israelites* speak the Language of *Canaan* and *Ashdod*. These are like the *Samaritans* of whom *Josephus* saith, when the Jews flourished they pretended to be a-kin to them, and come of the tribe of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, but when the Jews were persecuted, they disclaimed Kindred with them. The *old Serpent* hath taught men crooked windings, and to be for that Religion not which hath truth on its side, but power.

2 Use. Let us keep up the vigour of our zeal in times of degeneracy. We should by an holy *Antiperistasis* burn hotter in a frozen age. We live in the dregs of time ; Sin is grown common and impudent : 'Tis excellent to walk Antipodes to the World. *Rom. 12. 2.* Let us be as Lillies and Roses among the Briars. Sin is never the better because it is in fashion, nor will this plea hold at the last day, that we did as the most. God will say, Seeing you

you sinned with the Multitude, you shall go to Hell with the Multitude. O let us keep pure among dregs ; let us be like Fish that retain their freshness in salt waters ; and as that *Lamp* which shined in the *smoking Furnace*, Gen. 15. 17.

Consider, 1. To be holy in times of General defection is that which God is Greatly pleased with. The Lord was much taken with the holy conferences and dialogues of these Saints in the Text. When others were inveighing against the Deity, that there should be a parcel of holy Souls speaking of Glory and the Life to come, their words were Musick in Gods ears.

2. To keep up a spirit of Holiness in an adulterous Generation, is a Christians honour. This was the glory of the Church of *Pergamus*, that she held fast Christs Name, even *where Satans seat was*, Rev. 2. 13. The Impiety of the times is a Foyl to set off Grace the more, and make it cast a greater lustre. Then a Christian is most lovely, when he is (as *Ambrose* saith) like the Cypress, which keeps its Viridity and freshness in the Winter season. *Psalm* 37. 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold*

the Upright : An upright man is always worth beholding, but then he is most to be admired when like a bright Star he Shines in the dark, and having lost all, holds fast his integrity.

3. To be Good in a profligate Age, doth much animate weak beginners ; it *Strengthens feeble knees*, Isa. 35. 3. And shores up those *Temples of the Holy Ghost* which are ready to fall. One mans Zeal is a Torch for others to light at. How did the Constancy of the Martyrs inflame the love of many to the Truth ! Though only Christs blood doth Save, yet the blood of Martyrs may strengthen. St. *Paul's* Prison Chain, made Converts in *Nero's* Court, two of which were afterwards Martyrs as History relates. Mr. *Bradford's* holy advice and example so confirmed Bishop *Farrar* that he would not touch with the Roman Pollution. *

* Fox *Afts*
& *Mon.*

4. How sad will it be for Christians to fall off from their former Profession, and espouse a novel Religion. *Julian* Bathed himself in the blood of Beasts Offered in Sacrifice to the 'Heathen Gods, and so as much as in him lay wash'd off his former Baptism. In the time

time of *Julius Cesar* this Prodigy happened, after a plentiful Vintage there were wild Grapes appeared upon their Vines, which was looked upon as Ominous. When men seemed to bring forth the Fruits of Righteousness, and afterwards bring forth the Wild Grapes of Impiety, it is a sad Omen and Prognostick of their Ruine, 2 Pet. 2. 21. *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the Holy Commandment.* Let all this make us maintain the power of Holiness in the worst Times: Though others wonder we do not sin after the rate that they do, yet, remember, it is better to go to Heaven with a few, than to Hell in the Crowd.

How may we keep up the briskness *Quest.* and fervour of Grace in times of Apostacy.

1. Let us beware of having our hearts *Answ.* too much linked to the World. The World damps zeal, as Earth chokes the fire. We are bid to *love our Enemies*; but the World is such an Enemy as we must not love, 1 John 2. 15. *Love not the World.* The World bewitcheth with her

her Blandishments, and kills with her silver Darts. He who is a *Demas*, will be a *Judas*; a lover of the World, will for a piece of Money betray a good Cause, and make Shipwrack of a good Conscience.

2. Let us be Voluntiers in Religion; that is, *Choose* God's service, *Psal.* 119.

30. *I have chosen the way of truth.* It is one thing to be good out of *Design*, and another thing to be good out of *Choice*. Hypocrites are good only out of worldly design, they embrace the Gospel for secular advantage, and these will in time fall away. The *Chelidonian* Stone keeps its Vertue no longer than it is inclosed in Gold, take it out of the Gold, and it loseth its vertue. False Hearts are good no longer than they are inclosed in golden Prosperity, take them out of the Gold, and they lose all their seeming Goodness: But if we would retain our Sanctity in Backsliding times we must serve God purely out of Choice. He who is good out of Choice loves holiness for its beauty, and adheres to the Gospel, when all the Jewels of preferment are pulled off.

3. Let

3. Let us be inlaid with sincerity. If a piece of Timber begin to bend, it is because it is not found. Why do any bend and comply against their Conscience, but because their hearts are not found, *Psal. 78. 37. Their hearts were not right with him, neither were they sted-fast.* Sincerity causeth stability. When the Apostle exhorts to *stand fast* in the evil day, among the rest of the Christian armour, he bids them *put on the Girdle of truth*, Ephes. 6. 19. *Stand fast therefore, having your loins Girt about with truth.* The Girdle of Truth is nothing else but sincerity.

4. Let us get love to Christ. Love is an holy transport, it fires the affections, steels the Courage, carries a Christian above the love of life, and the fear of death, *Cant. 8. 7. Many waters cannot quench Love:* Love made Christ suffer for us. If any one ask what Christ died off; it may be answered, he died of Love. If we love Christ, we will own him in the worst times, and be like that Virgin *Basil* speaks of, who not accepting deliverance upon sinful terms, cried out, *Let Life and Money go, welcome Christ.*

5. If

5. If we would keep up the sprightly Vigour of Grace in evil times, let us harden our Hearts against the taunts and reproaches of the wicked. *David* was the *Song of the Drunkards*, Psal. 69. 12. A Christian is never the worse for reproach. The Stars are not the less Glorious though they have ugly names given them, the *Bear*, the *Dragon*, &c. Reproaches are but *Assula Crucis*, the *Chips of the Cross*. How will he endure the Stake, who cannot bear a Scoff? * Reproaches for Christ, are Ensigns of Honour, Badges of Adoption, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. ἐγκλήματα ἐγκωμία. * Let Christians bind these as a Crown about their Head. Better have men reproach you for being good, than have God Damn you for being wicked. Be not laughed out of your Religion: If a Lame man laugh at you for going upright, will you therefore halt?

* Quid iste faceret in igne, qui Christum rubuit in nube? Hieron.
* Chrysost.

6. If we would keep up the Vigour of devotion in a General Epilepsy, let us beg of God confirming Grace. Habitual Grace may flag; *Peter* had habitual Grace, yet was foiled; he lost a single Battel, though not the Victory. We need exciting, assisting, corroborating

ting Grace; not onely Grace in us, but Grace with us, 1 Cor. 15. 10. Auxiliary Grace (which is *ἐμπροσθεν τῷ πνεύματι*, a fresh gale of the Spirit) will carry us undauntedly through the Worlds blustering storms. Thus shall we be able to keep up our Heroick zeal in corrupt times, and be as *Mount Zion* which cannot be moved.

CHAP. II.

Shewing the Character in general of the Godly, and what the Fear of God is.

I. **H**AVING done with the frontispiece of the Text, I begin (1) with the Character in General of the Godly, they are Fearers of God, *they that feared the Lord.*

What Fear is meant here?

1. Negatively; It is not meant (1) of a *natural* Fear, which is a tremor or palpitation of Heart, occasioned by the approach of some imminent danger, * *Eccles. 12. 5. Fears shall be in the way.*

Quest.

Ans.

* *φύσις ἐστὶ λυπηρὴ καὶ τρεφῶσα ἐκ παλαιῶν ὡς μέλλοντος κακῆς.*

2. It *Arist. Rhet. lib. 2. c. 6.*

2. It is not meant of a *sinful* Fear, which is twofold.

1. A *Superstitious* Fear : An Hare crossing the way, is by some more dreaded than an Harlot lying in the Bed.

* *Pessimus*
in dubijs timor augur.

2. A *Carnal* fear* ; this is the *Ague* of the Soul which sets it a shaking. He who is *timorous* will be *treacherous* ; he will *decoy* his friend, and *deny* his God. Three times in one Chapter Christ cautions us against the fear of Men, *Mat.*

10. *Vers.* 26, 28, 31. *Aristotle* saith the reason why the Camelion turns into so many colours, is through excessive fear : Fear makes men change their Religion as the Camelion doth her Colours.

1. Carnal Fear is discrediting, 1 *Joh.*

4. 18. *Fear hath torment in it* ; the Greek word for *Torment*, * is sometimes put for Hell, *Mat.* 25. 46. *Fear hath Hell in it.*

* Κόλασις.

2. It is Pernicious. 1. It Indisposeth for Duty. The Disciples under the power of Fear, were fitter to *Fly* than to *Pray*, *Mat.* 26. 56.

2. It puts men upon indirect means to Save themselves, *Prov.* 26. 25. *The Fear of man bringeth a Snare* ; what made *Peter* deny Christ, and *Origen* sprinkle incense

incense before the Idol, but fear?

2. *Positively*; the Fear meant in the Text is a *Divine* Fear, which is the reverencing and adoring Gods Holiness, and setting our selves always under his Sacred inspection. The infinite distance between God and us causeth this Fear. When Gods Glory began to shine out upon the Mount, *Moses* said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*, Heb. 12. 21. Such as approach Gods presence with light feathery Hearts, and Worship him *αυτοῦς* in a rude careless manner, have none of this fear. In the words are two parts.

1. The *Act*, Fear.

2. The *Object*, the Lord.

They that feared the Lord: The fear of God is the *Summe* of all Religion, *Eccles.* 12. 13. Fear is the leading Grace, the first seed God sows in the Heart. When a Christian can say little of Faith, and perhaps nothing of Assurance, yet he dares not deny but he fears God. * God is so Great that he is afraid of displeasing him, and so Good that he is afraid of losing him.

* *Nehem.*
1. 11.

It is an indispensable Duty incumbent on Christians to be Fearing of God. *Doct.*

Eccles.

Eccles. 5. 7. Fear thou God. Deut. 28. 58. That thou maist fear this Glorious and fearful name the Lord thy God. This goes to the very constituting of a Saint. One can no more act as a Christian without Fear, than he can act as a man without reason. This Holy Fear is the fixed temper and Complexion of the Soul; This Fear is not *Servile* but *Filial*; there is difference between *Fearing God*, and *being afraid of God*; the Godly fear God as a Child doth his Father, the wicked are afraid of God as the Prisoner is of the Judge. This divine Fear will appear admirable, if you consider how it is mixed and interwoven with severall of the Graces.

1. The Fear of God is mixed with Love, *Psal. 145. 19, 20.* The Chast Spouse fears to displease her Husband because she loves him: There's a necessity that fear and love should be in conjunction. Love is as the Sails to swiften the Souls motion, and Fear as the Ballast to keep it steady in Religion: Love will be apt to grow wanton unless it be poised with fear.

2. The Fear of God is mixed with Faith, *Hebr. 11. 7. By Faith Noah moved*

mov'd with fear, &c. When the Soul looks either to Gods Holiness, or it's own sinfulness, it fears, but it is a fear mixed with faith in Christs merits; the Soul doth *tremble yet trust*. Like a Ship which lies at Anchor, though it shakes with the wind, yet it is fixed at Anchor. God in Great wisdom coupleth these two graces of Faith and Fear. Fear preserves seriousness, faith preserves chearfulness. Fear is as Lead to the Net to keep a Christian from floating in presumption; and Faith is as Cork to the Net to keep him from sinking in despair.

3. The Fear of God is mixed with Prudence: he who fears God hath the Serpents eye in the Doves head. He foresees and avoids those Rocks which others run upon. *Prov. 22. 3.* Though divine Fear doth not make a Person *Cowardly*, it makes him *Cautious*.

4. The Fear of God is mixed with Hope. *Psalms 33. 18.* *The eye of the Lord is on them that fear him, that hope in his mercy.* One would think Fear should destroy Hope, but it cherisheth it. Fear is to Hope as the

C

Oil

Oil to the Lamp, it keeps it burhing: the more we fear Gods Justice, the more we may hope in his Mercy. Indeed such as have no Fear of God do sometimes hope, but it is not *ἐν Χριστῷ ἐκ χάριτος*, *Good hope through Grace*, 2 *Thessa.* 2. 16. Sinners pretend to have the *helmet of Hope*, 1 *Thes.* 5. 8. but want the *breast-plate of Righteousness*, *Ephes.* 6. 14.

5. The Fear of God is mixed with Industry, *Heb.* 11. 7. *Noah moved with fear prepared an ark.* There is 1. A fear of *diffidence*, which represents God as a severe Judge, this takes the Soul off from duty*. 2. A fear of *diligence*; a Christian fears and prays, fears and repents. Fear quickens Industry. The Spouse fearing lest the Bridegroom should come before she is dressed, hastens and puts on her Jewels, that she may be ready to meet him. Fear causeth a watchful eye, and a working hand. Fear banisheth sloth out of it's Diocese. The Greatest labour in Religion (saith Holy Fear) is far less than the least pain the damned feel in Hell: no Greater Spur in the Heavenly race than fear.

* Mat. 25.

25.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Cogent Reasons enforcing the Fear of God.

THe Reasons enforcing this Holy Fear are, 1. Because Gods eye is alwayes upon us. He who is under the eye of his earthly Prince, will be carefull of doing any thing that should offend him. *Job 31. 4. Doth not he see my wayes, and count all my Steps?* God sees in the dark. *Psalm 139. 12. The darknes hideth not from thee.* The night is no Curtaine, the clouds are no Canopy to hinder or intercept Gods sight. He sees the Heart. A Judge can judge of the *fact*, but God judgeth of the *Heart*. *Jer. 17. 10.* He is like *Ezekiels wheels, full of eyes, Ezek. 10. 12.* and as *Cyril* saith, *ὅλος ὁπταλμός, all Eye.* Should not this make us walk with fear and circumspection? we cannot sin but our Judge looks on.

2. God interprets our not fearing him a slighting of him. As not to praise

C 2

God

God, is to wrong him; so not to fear God, is to sleight him. Of all things a person can least endure to be sleighted.

* ὁ γὰρ
φρονῶν ὁ
ἀνθρώπου.

Anst. rhet.

*Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God**? For a worm to sleight it's Maker causeth the *fury to rise up in Gods face.* Ezek. 38. 18.

3. God hath power to destroy us. *Mat. 10. 28. Fear him who hath power to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell.* God can look us into our Grave, and with a breath blow us into Hell, and shall we not fear him? Is it easie to wrestle with flames? *Psalms 90. 11. Who knoweth the Power of his anger?* What engines or buckets can quench the infernal fire? We are apt to fear men who have power in their hand to hurt us; what is their power to Gods? They threaten a Prison, God threatens Hell. They threaten our Life, God threatens our Soul, and shall we not tremble before him*? O dreadful, when the great Fountains of Gods wrath shall be broken up, and all his Bitter Vials poured out! *Ezek. 22. 14. Can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee?*

* In geben-
na nec qui
torquet fa-
tigatur.
nec qui tor-
quetur mo-
ritur. Bern.
flor.

Obiect.

But are not we bid to serve God without Fear? *Luke 1. 74.* We

We must not Fear God with such a fear as the wicked do; they fear him as a Turkish Slave doth his Pate-roon; they fear him so as they hate him and wish there were no God*. We must not serve God with this hellish fear, but we must serve him with an ingenuous fear sweetned with love.

Answ.

**Quem me-
rui odere
vult.*

CHAP. IV.

*Containing a practical Improvement of
the Proposition.*

IT confutes the *Papists*, who hold that a Christian cannot have Assurance, because he is to serve God with fear. Assurance and Fear are *diversa* but not *Opposita*, *different* but not *contrary*. A Child may have assurance of his Fathers love, yet hath a fear of offending him. Who more fearful of Sin than St. Paul? 1 Cor. 9. 27. Yet who had more assurance? Galat. 2. 20. *Who Loved me, and Gave himself for me.* Faith procures assurance*, fear pre-serves it.

*1 Use.
Confuta-
tion.*

* Ephes.
1. 13.

2 Use.
Informa-
tion.

Is it a duty to Fear God, what strangers then are they to Religion, who are void of this Holy Fear? The Godly fear and sin not, the wicked sin and fear not. They are like the *Leviathan*, who is *made without Fear*, Job 41. 33. Want of the fear of God is the innate Cause of all Wickedness, Rom. 3. 14. *Whose mouth is full of Cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood.* Whence was this? ver. 18. *There is no fear of God before their eyes: Abraham* surmized the men of *Gerar* would stick at no Sin; why so? Gen. 20. 11. *I thought surely the fear of God is not in this place.* The Judge in the Gospel is called an *unjust Judge*, Luke 18. 6. And no wonder, for *vers. 2. he feared not God.* There must needs be an excess of Sin where there wants the Fear of God to restrain it. The water must needs Overflow where there are no banks to keep it out. We live in a Godless age; durst men Sin at that rate as they do, if the fear of God were regent in their hearts? durst they swear, be unclean, use False weights, bear false witness, hate purity, deride Gods signs in the Heaven,

ven, Forge Plots, Persecute Christs body, if they had the fear of God before their eyes? these men proclaim to the World that they are *Atheists*; they believe not the Immortality of the Soul. They are worse than *brutish*, a Beast fears the fire, these fear not Hell Fire. They are worse than *Devils*, for they *believe and tremble*, Jam. 2. 19.

Let us bewail the want of the Fear of God.——*Terras Astræa reliquit.* Use 3. Lamentation.

Whence is it so few fear God? *Quest.*

1. Because they have not the knowledge of God. * *Prov. 1. 24. They have not knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord:* did men know God in his immense glory, they would be swallowed up with divine amazement. When the Prophet *Isaiah* had a glimpse of Gods Glory, he was stricken with holy consternation. *Isaiah 6. 5. Wo is me, I am undone, for mine eyes have seen the King the Lord of Hosts.* But the Ignorance of God banisheth fear. *Ans.* * *Omne peccatum san-datur in ignorantia.*

2. Men fear not God because they presume of his Mercy. God is merciful, and they doubt not of the Virtue of this sovereign Balm. But who

is Gods mercy for? *Luke 1. 50. His mercy is on them that fear him.* Such as fear not Gods Justice, shall not tast his Mercy.

Let this be for a *Lamentation*, that the fear of God is so vanished. Where almost is it to be found? Some fear *shame*, others fear *danger*, but where is he who fears a Deity? *Diogenes* came into a full Market with a Candle and Lanthorn; they asked him what he sought? saith he, *Hominem quero*, I seek a man; that is, a wise man. So in the Crowd of people we may go and seek a man fearing God.

And not only among the Commonalty, but even among *Professors* how few fear God in truth! Profession is often made a Mantle to cover sin. *Abalom* palliated his Treason with a Religious Vow. *2 Sam. 15. 7.* The *Pharisees* made long Prayer a preface to Oppression, *Mat. 23. 14.* This is fordid, to carry on wicked designs *sub larva Pietatis*, under a pretext of Piety. The Snow covers many a dunghill. A snowy vvhite Profession covers many a foul heart. The sins of
Pro.

Professors are more odious. Thistles are bad in a Field, but worse in a Garden. The sins of the wicked *anger* God, but the sins of Professors *Grieve* him.

It reproves *Jovial* Sinners, vvhho are so far from fearing God, that they spend their time in mirth and vvantonnels. *Luke 17. 27. They did eat, they drank, they married, till the flood came and destroyed them all.* There is a place in *Africa* called *Tombutium*, where the Inhabitants spend all the day in piping and dancing. What sensual effeminate lives do the Gallants of our age live! They spend their Life in a *Frolick*. As if God had made them to be like the *Leviathan* who *plays in the Sea.* *Job 21. 13. They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ.* They ride to Hell upon the back of Pleasure, and go merrily to damnation.

Use 4.
Reproof.
1 Branch

Though the Times are sad, they have no fear in regard of the *publique*: Doth not God call us to trembling? our sins are the *fiery Comets* that preface evil. May not we fear *the Glory is departing*? may not we fear the death

death of Religion before the birth of Reformation? May not we fear some portentous calamity should bring up the rear of former Judgments? and (as the Prophet Ezekiel saith,) Should

* *cantabit* we then make-mirth? Ezek. 21. 10*.
maestis ti- But Jovial spirits have banished the
biz summi- fear of God. Amos 6. 4, 5. *bus.* Ovid. *That lye*

upon beds of Ivory, and stretch them-
selves upon their couches, that drink wine
in Bowls, and anoint themselves with
the chief Oyntments. Sinners whose
 hearts are hardned with soft pleasures,
 let them have their lusts, and fare-
 well Christ and his Gospel. Jude 12.
Feeding themselves without fear. But
 they Forget death will bring in the
 reckoning, and they must pay the
 reckoning in Hell. The Great Turk
 when he intends the death of any of
 his *Bashaws*, invites them to a Sump-
 tuous Feast, and then causeth them
 to be taken away from the Table and
 strangled: so Satan Gluts men with
 sinful pastimes and delights, and then
 strangles them. Foolish Gallants are
 like the Fish that swim pleasantly
 through the Silver streams of *Jordan*, till
 at last they fall into the dead Sea*.

* 1 Tim. 6.
 9.

It

It reproves *secure* Sinners who have ^{2. Br.} no Fear of God. Like *Laiſh* of old, *Judg.* 18. 27. *A people quiet and secure.* Thoſe who are leaſt ſafe, are moſt *confident*. Security caſts men into a deep Sleep. Birds that build and rooſt in Steeples, being uſed to the continual ringing of Bells, the noiſe doth not at all diſquiet them. So Sinners who have been long uſed to the ſound of *Aarons* Bells, though ever and anon they have a peal rung out againſt their ſins, yet being uſed to it, they are not ſtartled. A ſecure ſinner is Known thus :

1. He lives as bad as the worſt, yet hopes to be ſaved as well as the beſt. He doth *bleſs himſelf, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart,* Deut. 29. 19. As if a man ſhould drink Poiſon, yet not doubt but he ſhall have his health. A ſecure ſinner lies in *Delilahs* lap, yet hopes to be in *Abrahams* boſom.

2. A ſecure ſinner thinks all is well, becauſe all is in peace. He hears others ſpeak of a *Spirit of bondage*, and the terrors they have felt for ſin, he thanks God he never Knew what Trouble of ſpirit meant ; he thinks his Conſci-

Conscience is *Good*, because it is *quiet*. When the Devil keeps the Palace *all is in peace*, Luke 11. 21. The Philosopher saith, one Great sign of an Earthquake is excessive Calmness of the Air: ungrounded peace doth preface an Earthquake in the conscience.

* פו'גוס
אין אליו
ג' פ'ר.

Mat. 26. 25

3. A secure sinner is careless about the main Chance. The Soul is the princely part, which is crowned with *reason*; it is a glass of the Trinity, as *Plato* calls it. A secure sinner provides for his Body, but neglects his Soul; like one that waters his Flowers, but never minds his Jewels. Behold here a secure person, who is in a spiritual Lethargy; he hath no fence of the life to come, he is destitute of the fear of God.

3. Branch. It reproves *Scoffers*, who are the vilest of sinners. 2 Pet. 3. 3. *There shall come in the last daies Scoffers*. Such were *Lucian* and *Porphiry*. These *Isbmaels* jeer at holy walking, and make all Religion a Ridicule. They throw Squibs of reproach at the Saints. *Quintinus* scoffed at Christs *Apostles*. In the Massacre at *Paris*, the Papists cried out to the Protestants when they

they murdered them, *Where is now your God? what is become of all your Psalms now, and your Prayers?* Some Martyrs in *Prague*, as they were at Supper (being the next day to suffer) comforted themselves saying, That this was their last Supper upon Earth, and that to morrow they should sup with Christ in Heaven; a Great Papist flouted them, saying, *Hath Christ Cooks for you in Heaven?* These are Devils in the likeness of men. They are far from the fear of God: The Scorners chair stands at the mouth of Hell.

It exhorts us to get the fear of God planted in our hearts. *Prov. 28.* Use 5. Exhortation.

19. *Happy is he that feareth alway* *.

The fear of God would influence all our actions. It would make us Good in both Tables. It would make us *Holy* towards God, and *Righteous* towards men. We would be true in our Promises, just in our dealings. *Mat. 7. 12.* That I may press you to this Holy Fear, let me shew you the dignity and excellency of it.

1. The fear of God is the very Badge and Livery of a Saint. The Saints of old were men fearing God. *Gen. 22. 12.*

Act.

Act. 10. 22. 1 Kin. 18. 3. Obadiah feared the Lord Greatly. Not all the Moral Vertues in their Highest elevation make a Saint, but here is his true Character, He is one that Fears God. Saint *Austin* said of himself, that he did knock at Heaven-gate *tremibunda manu*, with a trembling hand; Christ calls his Elect *his sheep*, John 10. 27. Sheep are of a trembling nature. The Saints are tremulous, they dare not take that liberty as others do.

2. The Fear of God is a main branch of wisdom. 'Tis called ראשית, the Head of wisdom; Prov. 1. 7. * *Wisdom is more precious than Rubies*, Prov. 3. 15. No Jewel we wear, doth so adorn us as wisdom; now the fear of God is our wisdom: Job 28. 28. *And unto man he said, the fear of the Lord that is wisdom* *.

* ἐν τῷ
σοφῶν ἡδὲ
ἐν τῷ
Σοφοκλῆς.

* Corona sa-
pientiae Ti-
mor Domini.
Aug. Tom. 9

Quest.

Wherein is the fear of God the true wisdom?

Ans.

1. The fear of God is Wisdom as it makes us careful about our spiritual accounts. Wisdom lies in nothing more than in keeping accounts exactly. The fear of God teacheth one to examine the state of his Soul criti-

critally. O my Soul how is it with thee? dost thou gain or lose? is thy Faith in it's Infancy, being but newly laid to the breast of a Promise? or is it Grown to some stature? how is it? doth Grace prevail or Sin? Thus the fear of God makes us wisely ballance our accounts, and see how matters stand between God and our Sou's.

Psalms 77. 6. I commune with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search.

2. The fear of God is Wisdom as it makes us understand divine secrets. *Psalms 25. 14. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him**. He must needs be wise who is acquainted with the *Arcana cæli*, the secrets of Heaven. A fearer of God is acquainted with the secret of *Election*, 1 *Theff.* 1. 4. of Gods love, *Rev.* 1. 5. of the *holy unction*, 1 *John* 2. 20. He knows Gods mind, 1 *Cor.* 2. 16. *We have the mind of Christ.*

**Arcana Evangelii per interventionem spiritus illuminationem enunciat Deus. Piscator.*

3. The fear of God is Wisdom as it makes us considerative. *Psalms 119. 59. I considered my wayes.* A great part of wisdom lies in consideration. He who fears God considers how Vain the world is, therefore dares not love it ;

it ; how short Time is, therefore dares not lose it ; how precious Salvation is, therefore dares not neglect it.

4. The Fear of God is Wisdom as it makes us walk wisely. Col. 4. 5. *Walk wisely, πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω, towards them that are without.* 1. The Fear of God makes us walk affably. Gen. 23. 7. *Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the Children of Heth.* Piety doth not exclude Curtesie. 2. The Fear of God makes us walk *inoffensively* : it prevents not only Scandals but Indecencies. 2 Cor. 11. 12. *That I might cut off occasion from them that desire occasion.* The Veneration of a Deity causeth circumcision of Heart, and circumcision of Life.

5. The Fear of God is Wisdom, as it preserves us from Hell : 'tis wisdom to keep out of danger ; fear makes us *fly from the wrath to come.*

3. The Fear of God is the best Certificate to shew for Heaven. Have you knowledge ? so hath Satan ; have you Profession ? so hath Satan, he *transforms himself into an Angel of light.* But have you filial fear ? herein you excel him. The fear of God is, though
not

not our *Plea*, yet our *Evidence* for Heaven.

4. There is that in God which may command fear. *Job 37. 22. With God is terrible Majesty.*

1. With God is *Majesty*.

1. There is Majesty in Gods Name; *Jehovah*. It comes from an Hebrew Radix*, which imports Gods absolute, Eternal, and Independent being. *יהוה

2. There is Majesty in Gods Looks. *Job* had but a glimpse of God, and he was even swallowed up with divine amazement, *Job 42. 5. Now mine Eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself.*

3. There is Majesty in Gods Words, he speaks with Majesty; as when he gave the Law *in thundring*, insomuch that the people said, *Let not God speak with us lest we dye.*

4. There is Majesty in Gods Attributes; his Holiness, Power, Justice, which are the Irradiations of the divine Essence.

5. There is Majesty in Gods Works, *Psalms 145. 5. I will speak of the Honour and Majesty of thy wondrous works.*

Every Creature sets forth Gods Majesty; we may see the Majesty of God Blazing in the Sun, Twinkling in the Stars: Gods Ma-

D

jesty

jeſty is diſcernable in thoſe two Wonders of nature *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, *Job* 40. 18. *chap.* 41. 19. In ſhort, the Maſteſty of God is ſeen in humbling the Children of Pride. He turned King *Nebuchadnezzar* to graſs, and made him Fellow-commoner with the Beaſts: Doth not all this call for Fear?

2. With God is *Terrible* Maſteſty. *Pſalm* 76. 12. *He is terrible to the Kings of the Earth.* There is a time coming when God will be dreadful to his enemies; when Conſcience is awake, when Death ſtrikes, when the laſt Trump ſounds. And ſhall not we Fear this God? *Jer.* 5. 22. *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my preſence?* The Fearing Gods Juſtice is the way not to feel it.

And let it not ſeem ſtrange to you; if I tell you, that in reſpect of Gods infinite Maſteſty, there will be ſome of this bleſſed Fear in Heaven. Not a Fear that hath *Torment* in it, for *Perſect love will caſt out Fear.* But an Holy, Sweet, Reverential fear. Though God hath ſo much beauty in him as ſhall cauſe love, and joy, in Heaven,
yet

yet this beauty is mixed with so much Majesty, as shall cause a Veneration in Glorified Saints.

5. The Fear of God *tends to life*; Pro. 19. 23. It is true, 1. In a *temporal* fence, Prov. 10. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth daies*; in the Original it is, *It addeth dayes* *. Long life is Promised as a blessing, Psalm 91. 16. *With long Life will I satisfy him*. The best way to come to an *evyneta*, a Good Old age, is the Fear of God. Sin curtails the life: many a mans excess wafts his Vitals, enervates his strength, and cuts him short of those years which by the course of nature might be arrived at *. You that desire to live long, live in the Fear of God. Deut. 6. 24. *The Lord commanded us to fear the Lord our God, that he might preserve us alive*.
 * *Cum seculum
 et mortem
 acceleras?*
 Eccles. 7.
 17.
 Mercet.

2. It is true in a *Spiritual* fence: The Fear of the Lord *tendeth to life*: namely, to *life Eternal*. Life is sweet, and *Eternal* makes it Sweeter †. The Life of blis hath no Term of Years wherein it expires, 1 Thes. 4. 17. *Ever with the Lord*: The Lamp of Glory shines, but doth not spend; so that
 D 2 divine

† *Aeterna
 Vita vera
 vita, Aug.*

divine Fear tends to Life; a life with God and Angels for ever.

6. The Fear of God gives full satisfaction, *Prov. 19. 23. He that hath it, shall abide satisfied.* Such as are destitute of Gods Fear never meet with satisfaction. *Job 20. 22. In the midst of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.* This is a riddle, to be full yet not have enough. The meaning is, there is still something wanting: he who Fears not God, though his Barns are full, yet his Mind is not quiet. The sweet Waters of Pleasure do rather inflame the thirst than satisfy it. *Omnia fui et nihil expedit*; I have run through all the delights and Grandures of the world, and could never find full contentment, said the Emperour *Severus*. But he who hath the Fear of the Lord, *shall abide satisfied.*

1. He shall be *satisfied.*

His Soul shall be filled with Grace, his Conscience with peace: an Holy man said, when God had replenished him with inward joy, *It is enough Lord, thy Servant is a clay vessel and can hold no more.*

2. He shall *abide satisfied.*

This satisfaction shall not cease; it shall

shall be a Cordial in death, and a Crown after death.

7. The fear of God makes a little to be sweet, *Prov. 15. 16. Better is a little with the fear of the Lord.* Why is a little better? because that *little* a Believer hath he holds *in Capite*, in his Head Christ; that *little* is sweetened with the love of God. He hath with that *little* a contented mind; and contentment turns *Daniels Pulse* into Venison*. ^{*Dan. 1. 12}
Again, that *little* is a Pledge of more; that little Oyl *in the Cruse* is but an earnest of that Golden joy and bliss which the Soul shall have in Heaven. Thus a *little* with the Fear of God is better than all un sanctified riches. *Lazarus's* Crumbs were better than *Dives* his Banquet.

8. The Fear of God is a Christians safety. He is invulnerable, nothing can hurt him: Plunder him of his Money, he carries a treasure about him <sup>* τὸ θεῶν
κόστος πάν-
των χρημα-
τῶν ἐν τῷ
ρῶτῳ
καρδίᾳ</sup> he cannot be robbed of*. *Isa. 33. 6.* Cast him into bonds, his Conscience is free; Kill his Body, it shall rise again. ^{Chryf.}
He who hath on this Breast-Plate of Gods Fear, may be shot at, but can <sup>† Si vis ef-
se securus,
semper time.</sup> never be shot thorow †.

D 3

9. The

9. The Fear of God makes all things go well with us, *Psalms* 128. 2. *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, happy shalt thou be, and it shall*
 †*Eccles.* 8. *be well with thee* †.

12. Is it not well with that man who hath all things go on his side, and hath nothing wanting that may do him Good? *Psalms* 84. 11. If God sees Health or Riches Good for him, he shall have them. Every Providence shall center in his happiness. O what an inducement is here to solid Piety. Come what times will, *it shall be well with them that Fear God.* When they dye they shall go to God, and while they live every thing in the world shall do them good.

10. The Fear of God is a great Cleanser, *Psalms* 19. 9. *The fear of the Lord is clean.* It is so, 1. In its own nature, it is a pure, Christal, Orient grace. 2. It is clean Effective, in the effect of it; it cleanseth the Heart and Life; as a Spring works out the mud, so it purgeth out the love of sin. The Heart is the *Temple of God*, and Fear sweeps and cleanseth this Temple that it be not defiled.

11. The

11. The Fear of God makes us accepted with God, *Act. 10. 35.* *In every nation he that Feareth God is accepted with him.* What was St. Paul so ambitious of? *2 Cor. 5. 9.* *We labour that we may be accepted with him.** * φιλομίαν μεθεα.
Divine Fear ingratiates us into divine Favour. Such as are Fearless of God, neither their Persons or Offerings find acceptance, *Amos 5. 21, 22.* *I despise your Feast dayes, and I will not smell in your solemn Assemblies; though ye offer me burnt-offerings, I will not accept them.* Who will take a Gift from one that hath the plague?

12. The Fear of God layes a train for spiritual joy: some may think the Fear of God breeds sadness; no, it is the in-let to joy*. The Fear of God is the morning Star, which ushers in the Sun light of comfort, *Acts 9. 31.* * τὸν δεινὸν ὁραμένον πᾶσαν τὴν ἡσπέρην ἐλάττει τὴν πύλιν.
Walking in the Fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy ghost. The Chryl. ad
Fear of God hath solid joy in it, though pop. Anti-
not wanton. *Oecolampadius* an holy och. Hom.
man being on his sick-bed, was asked 18.
if the Light offended him? he putting
his hand to his heart said, *Hic sat lucis;*
Here I have light enough. God mix-

eth joy with Holy Fear, that fear may not seem slavish.

* *Quid timet homo, in sinu Dei positus?*
Aug.

13. The Fear of God drives out all other base Fear*. Carnal fear is an enemy to Religion. The Fear of God frights it away; it causeth Courage, *Exod. 18. 21. Able men, such as Fear God*: some Translations render it, *Men of Courage*. When a Dictator Governed in Rome, all other Offices ceased. Where the Fear of God rules in the Heart, it expells fleshly Fear. When the Emperess *Eudoxia* threatened to banish *Chrysostom*, *Tell her*, saith he, *I fear nothing but sin*. The Fear of God swallows up all other Fear, as *Moses Rod* swallowed up the *Magitians Rods*.

† *Vitia hominum sunt epule demonum.*

14. To be void of Gods Fear, is Folly, *Psalms 75. 4. I said to the Fools, deal not Foolishly, and to the wicked, lift not up the Horn*. 1. Are not they Fools who gratifie their Enemy? They who want the Fear of God do so. Satan baits his hook with pleasure and profit, and they swallow bait and hook and all; this pleaseth Satan, mens sins feast the Devil†. Who but a Fool would humour his enemy?

2. Is

2. Is it not folly to preferre Slavery before Liberty? if a Slave in the gally should have his freedom offered him, but he should say, he had rather Tug at the Oar and be a slave, than have his liberty, would not he be Judged indiscreet? Such is the case of him who Fears not God. The Gospel offers to free him from the miserable captivity of Sin, but he chooseth rather to be a slave to his lusts*. He is like the Servant under the Law. *Exod. 21. 5. I love my Master, I will not go out free.* He was displeased with a year of Jubilee: The Foolish sinner had rather have *his Ear bored* to the Devils service, than be *translated into the Glorious liberty of the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 21.

* *Stulti est compedes licet aureas amare. Seneca.*

3. Is not he a Fool, who having but one Jewel will venture the loss of it? The Soul is this Jewel, and the sinner is fearless of it, he will throw it away upon the world; as if one should throw Pearls and Diamonds at Pear-trees. *Ephrem Syrus* used to say, He who Pampers his body and neglects his Soul, is like him who feasts his Slave and starves his Wife.

4. Is

4. Is not he a Fool, who refuseth a rich offer? if one should offer to adopt another, and make him Heir of his Estate, and he should refuse it, would not his discretion be called in question? God offers Christ to a sinner, and promiseth to entail all the riches of Heaven upon him, but wanting the Fear of God he refuseth this Great offer. *Psalm 81. 11. Israel would none of me*: Is not this a Prodigy of madness? may not the Devil beg every sinner for a Fool at the last day†?

† *Namquid
Deus stultis
daturus est
regnum coe-
lorum.* Aug.

15. The Fear of God is a Sovereign Antidote against Apostasie: the Devil was the first Apostate. How ripe is this sin! more shipwracks are at Land than at Sea; men make shipwrack of a Good Conscience. Apostates are said to put Christ to open shame, Heb. 6. 6. The Fear of God is a *εὐλαξιν*, a preservative against Apostacy. Jer. 32. 40. *I will put my Fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. I will so love them, that I will not depart from them; and they shall so Fear me, that they shall not depart from me.*

15. There are excellent Promises made

made to them that Fear God, *Malach.*

4. 2. *Unto you that Fear my Name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his Wings.* Here is a promise of Christ; he is a *Sun* for Light and Vivifical Influence; and a *Sun of Righteousness*, as he diffuseth the Golden beams of Justification*. And he hath *healing* in his Wings; the *Sun* heals the Air, dries up the Cold moistures, exhales the Vapours which would be Pestilential; so Christ hath *healing in his Wings*, he heals the hardness and impurity of the Soul. And the *Horison* in which this *Sun* ariseth, is in hearts Fearing God. *To you that Fear my Name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise.* And, there is another Great Promise, *Psalms 115. 13. He will bless them that Fear the Lord, both Small and Great.* God blebseth such in their Name, Estate, Souls. And this blessing can never be reversed: As *Isaac* said, *I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed,* Gen. 27. 33. Such as Fear God are priviledged Persons, none can take away from them either their *birth-right*, or their *blessing*.

* *Radius
justitiæ suæ
perfundens
animum.
Tremel.*

16. Fear is an admirable Instru-
ment

ment in Promoting Salvation, *Philip. 2. 12. Work out your Salvation with Fear.* Fear is that flaming Sword, which turns every way to keep sin from entering*. *Prov. 6. 16.* Fear stands Sentinel in the Soul, and is ever upon it's Watch-Tower. Fear causeth circumspection, he who walks in Fear treads warily: Fear begets Prayer, and Prayer engageth the help of Heaven.

* *Custos ani-
me timor.*
Aug.

17. The Lord is much pleased with such as Fear him. *Psalms 147. 11. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that Fear him.* In the Septuagint it is*, The Lord bears Good will towards them that Fear him: *Pagnin and Buxtorf* render it, The Lord *delights* in them that Fear him. Never did Suitor take such pleasure in a Person he loved, as God doth in them that Fear him; they are his *Hephzibah*, or chief solace, *Isa. 62. 4.* He saith of them as of *Sihon*, *Psalms 132. 14. Here is my rest for ever, here will I dwell.* A sinner is a vessel in which is no pleasure, *Hosea 8. 8.* But Fearers of God are Favourites.

* *ἐὺδοκεῖ
αὐτοῦ.*

18. Such as Fear God are the only persons that shall be saved. *Psalms 85. 9. Salvation is nigh them that Fear him.*

him. Salvation is said to be *far* from the Wicked, *Psalms* 119. 155. They and Salvation are so far asunder, that they are like never to meet. But Gods Salvation is nigh them that Fear him: What do we aspire after but Salvation? 'Tis the end of all our Prayers, Tears, Sufferings. Salvation is the Crown of our desires, the flower of our joy, And who shall be enriched with Salvation, but the Fears of God? *His Salvation is nigh them that Fear him.* Let these cogent arguments perswade to the Fear of God.

Let us put our selves upon a strict Scrutiny and Tryal, whether we have the Fear of God planted in our hearts.

Use 6.
Trial.

How may we know it?

Quest.

1. The Fear of God will make a man fear sin, *Gen.* 39. 9. *How can I do this Great wickedness and sin against God*; indeed sin is the only Formidable thing; this is the *Gorgons* Head, that affrights; it is the Evil of Evils. 'Tis the Poison the Old Serpent hath spit into our Virgin-nature: In Sin is both *Pollution* and *Enmity*: Sin is compared to a *Thick Cloud*, *Isa.* 44. 22. which

Answ.

which not only hides the light of Gods Face, but brings down showers of Wrath. Sin is worse than all penal evils: there is more evil in a drop of Sin, than in a Sea of Affliction. 1. Sin is the *cause* of Affliction, it conjures up all the Winds and Storms in the World*. Out of this Viperous womb come Mutines, Divisions, Massacres, and the cause is worse than the effect.

* ὅτις
ἀμαρτία
καὶ κατ'
μὲν.
Chryl.

2. In Affliction Conscience may be quiet; the Hail may beat upon the Tiles, when there is Musick in the room: but Sin terrifies the Conscience. *Nero* in the midst of Feasts and Roman sports was full of horreur of mind; the numbers of men he had Killed, troubled him. *Cataline* was frightened at every noise. *Cain* in Killing *Abel* stab'd half the World at one blow, yet could not he Kill the Worm of his own Conscience.

Sin is the Spirits of Mischief distilled, it puts a *Sting* into death, 1 Cor. 15. 56. It is worse than Hell. 1. Hell is a burden only to the sinner, but sin is a Burden to God, *Amos* 2. 13.

2. There is *Justice* in Hell, but sin
is

is the most unjust thing. It would rob God of his Glory, Christ of his Purchase, the Soul of it's Happiness. 'Tis more bitter to sin against Christ, than to suffer the torments of Hell, saith *Chrysostom*: Is not sin then to be feared? he who Fears God is afraid of touching this *forbidden fruit*: More Particularly:

1. He who Fears God, is afraid to do any thing that he *doubts* may be sinful, *Rom.* 14. 23. He will not swallow Oaths like Pills, lest they should afterwards work in his Conscience: he dares not mix any thing in Gods Worship which he hath not appointed, he doubts it is like *Offering strange fire*. Where Conscience is *Scrupulous*, it is safer to forbear; for, *what is not of Faith is Sin.*

2. He who Fears God, fears the appearance of Sin, *1 Thes.* 5. 22. *Abstain, and avoid usages, from all appearance of Evil.* Some things are *Male colorata* (as *Bernard* speaks) they have a bad look, and carry a show of evil in them: To go to the Idol Temple, though one doth not joyn with them in Worship, is an appearance of evil.

evil. He whose Heart is ballasted with Gods Fear, flies from that which looks like sin. It was a good speech of Bernard to *Eugenius*, By avoiding the *Act* of sin we preserve our Peace, by avoiding the *appearance* of it we preserve our Fame. The Fear of God makes us shun the *Occasion* of sin: the *Nazarite* under the Law was not only to forbear Wine, but he must not eat *Grapes*, which might occasion intemperancy. *Joseph* fled from his Mistresses temptation, he would not be seen in her company.

The appearance of evil though it defile not ones own Conscience, it may offend anothers Conscience: and hear what the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 8. 12. *When ye wound the weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ*. Such as avoid not the appearances and in-lets to sin, make the truth of their Grace to be suspected: How far are they from the Fear of God, who forgetting their prayer, *Lead us not into temptation*, run themselves into the Devils mouth? they go to Plays and Masquerades, which are the Lures and Incentives of Filthiness; others associate familiarly

liarly with the Wicked, and are too often in their Company: which is like going among them that have the Plague. 1 Cor. 5. 9. *I wrote to you not to Company with Fornicators.* Traffique is one thing, keeping Company is another. *Polycarp* would have no Society with *Marcion* the Heretick. Twisting into a cord of Friendship with sinners is a show of evil, it hardens them in sin; and wounds the credit of Religion.

But did not Christ often converse *Object.* with Sinners?

1. Christ did sometimes go among *Answ.* the Wicked, not that he approved of their sins: but as a Physitian goes among the diseased to heal them; so Christ intended to Work a Cure upon them, *Mark* 2. 17. It was their conversion he aimed at.

2. Though Jesus Christ did sometimes converse with Sinners, yet he could receive no Infection by them: his divine nature was a sufficient Antidote against the contagion of sin. As the Sun cannot be defiled with the thick Vapours which are exhaled from the Earth, and fly into the middle Region:

E

so

so the black Vapours of sin could not defile the Sun of Righteousness. Christ was of that spotless purity that he had no receptibility of Evil; but the case is altered with us, we have a stock of corruption within: therefore it is dangerous to incorporate with the Wicked lest we be defiled.

Such as revere the divine Majesty dare not go near the borders of Sin. Those who went near the *Fiery Furnace*, though they did not go into it, were burned, *Dan. 3. 22*. A wise Christian should in all his transactions put those three questions of * *Bernard* to himself; Whether is this I do *lawful*, or *decent*, or *expedient*.

* *An liceat,*
an decent,
an expediat.

3. He who Fears God, dares not sin *secretly*. An Hypocrite may forbear *gross* sin, because of the shame; but not clandestine secret sin. He is like one that shuts up his Shop-windows, but follows his Trade within doors: But a man Fearing God dares not sin, though he had *Gyges's Ring* and could walk invisibly, and no eye see him. *Levit. 19. 14. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, or put a stumbling block before the blind; but shalt Fear thy God.* If one should curse

curse a deaf man, he cannot hear him; or lay a stumbling block in a blind mans way, he cannot see him: Yea but the Fear of God will make one avoid those sins which can neither be heard or seen by men. Gods Seeing *in secret* is a sufficient *Supersedeas* and Counterpoison against Sin.

4. He who Fears God dares not commit sin, though it might bring him in *Emolument*. Gain is the Golden bait with which Satan fisheth for Souls: this was the last temptation the Devil used to Christ, *All this will I give thee*, Mat. 4. 9. How many bow down to the *Golden Image*! *Joshua* who could stop the course of the Sun, could not stop *Achan* in his pursuit after the wedge of Gold †. But he who Fears God dares not sin to get preferment: *David* durst not touch the Lords anointed though he knew he was to reign next, 2 *Sam.* 26. 23. A Godly man is assured that a full Purse is but a poor recompence for a wounded Conscience. If any shall go to choak him with Steeples, he saith as *Peter*, Acts 8. 20. *Thy money perish with thee.*

† *Cui nihil satis est, eodem nihil turpe. Tacitus.*

5. He who Fears God, dares not gratifie his own *vengeful* humour. *Homer* saith, Revenge is sweet as dropping Hony ; but Grace makes a man rather bury an injury than revenge it. He knows who hath said, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay*, Rom. 12. 19. He who hath the Fear of God before his eyes, is so far from revenge, that he requites good for evil. *Miriam* murmured against *Moses*, and *Moses* prayed for her, that God would heal her of her Leprosie, *Numb.* 12. 13. The Prophet *Elisba* instead of smiting his Enemies, set Bread and Water before them, 2 King 6. 22.

6. He who Fears God dares not do that which is of *evil report*, though possibly the thing in it self may be no sin. 1 Cor. 6. 1. *Dare any of you having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust?* Yes, might some say, what sin is it to have a just cause brought before unbelievers, that it may be decided? O but, might the Apostle reply, though the thing in it self be lawful, yet because it sounds ill, and exposeth your Religion to the Scorn and insult of unbelievers, you

you that Fear God should not dare to do it. It were better to decide it by a prudent arbitration. 1 Cor. 6. 12. *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient.*

7. He who Fears God is not only afraid of evil *actions*, but to offend God in his *Thoughts*. Deut. 19. 6. *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, &c.* To think of sin with delight is to act it over in the fancy, this is Culpable. A man may think himself into Hell. What were the Apostate Angels damned for, was it for any more than Proud thoughts? This is the first note of Trial, He who reverenceth a Deity flies from Sin. It is a saying of *Anselm*, If Sin were on one side and Hell on the other, I would rather leap into Hell than willingly sin against God.

2. He who Fears God, walks by *Rule* rather than *Example*: Example is for the most part corrupt. Examples of great men are influential*. *Pharaoh* had learned *Joseph* to swear, but *Joseph* had not learned *Pharaoh* to pray. The examples of others cannot justify a thing intrinsically evil †. A fearer

* *Princeps*

imperio

magnus, ex-

emplo ma-

ior Pater-

culus.

† *Multitu-*

do erranti-

um non pa-

rit errori

patrocini-

um, Hic.

of rom.

of God steers the *Rudder* of his Life according to the *Compass* of the Word. He looks to the sacred Canon as the Mariner to the Load-Star, or *Israel* to the *Pillar of Fire*, to direct him. *Isa. 8. 20. To the Law, to the Testimony.*

3. He who Fears God keeps his commandments, *Eccles. 12. 13. Fear God, and keep his commandments.* Luther said, He had rather obey God than work miracles. A Gracious Soul confesseth his own will to fulfil Gods: if the Lord bid him Crucifie his bosom-sin, forgive his enemies, he instantly obeys. An Heathen exercising much cruelty to a Christian, asked him in scorn, What Great Miracle his Master *Christ* ever did? The Christian replied, This Miracle, that though you use me thus Cruelly, *I can forgive you.* An Holy Heart Knows there is nothing lost by obedience. *David sware unto the Lord, that he would not rest till he found a place for God, Psalm 132. 4, 5.* And God Sware again to David, *that of the fruit of his body he would set upon his throne, Psalm 132. 11.*

4. He who Fears God is alike Good

Good in all Companies : He diffuseth the sweet savour of Godliness where ever he comes. Hypocrites can change themselves into all shapes, and be as their company is ; Serious in one company, and Vain in another : He who reverenceth a Deity, is *semper idem*, alike Good in all places. An even Pulse shows Health : an even walking shows Grace. If a Good man be providentially cast among the wicked, he will not coalesce with them, but in his deportment shows forth a Majesty of Holiness.

5. He who Fears God is good in the Station where God hath set him. Take an instance in *Joseph*, Gen. 42. 18. *I fear God*. And see a pattern of *Relative* sanctitie : He showed towards his Master fidelity, towards his Mistress chastity, towards his Father duty, towards his Brethren bounty. A good man makes his family *Palæstra Pietatis*, a Nursery of Piety *, as it was said of *Cranmer*. * Psalm 102. 1.

6. He who Fears God, dares not neglect Family or Closet-prayer, *Psalms* 109. 4. *I Give my self to Prayer*. Prayer whispers in Gods ears. *Clemens*

E 4

Alexan-

Alexandrinus calls it *private conference* with God. Why was *Nymphas's* house call'd a *Church*, *Col. 4. 15*. But because it was consecrated by Prayer? A Gracious Soul puts forth *fervent sighs* in Prayer, *Rom. 8. 26*. And sure that prayer doth soonest pierce Heaven which pierceth ones own Heart.

If Prayer be made the Touch-stone, then the number of those who Fear God is but small. Are there not many prayerless Families in this City and Nation? *Job 15. 4. Thou castest off fear, thou restrainest prayer*. When men restrain prayer, they cast off the Fear of God. It is the brand set upon a Reprobate, *Psalms 14. 4. He calls not upon God*.

7. He who Fears God will not oppress his Neighbour. *Levit. 25. 17. Ye shall not oppress one another, but thou shalt fear thy God*. How can he be Holy who is not just? A Saint, yet an Extortioner is a Solæcism. A cruel oppressor is like *Judas*, his bowels are fallen out. The Fear of God would cure this. *Neh. 5. 8. Will ye sell your brethren? v. 9. Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God? As if Nehemiah had said, If ye had*

had the Fear of God ye would not be so wicked, ye would not rise upon the ruines of others, and to wrong them, damn your selves.

8. He who Fears God is given to works of Mercy. The Fear of God is alwaies joyned with love to our Brethren. Grace may have a *Trembling hand*, but it hath not a *Withered hand*, it stretcheth out its self to relieve the indigent. *Jam. 1. 27. Pure Religion before God and the Father is this, to Visit the Fatherless and the Widdows in their Affliction.* To Visit them is not only to go to see them in Affliction: our Saviour expounds what Visiting is, *Mat. 25. 36. Ye visited me; how was that? vers. 35. I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat.* Good works are not the *Cause* of our Justification, but they are the *Evidence*. How far are they from the Fear of God, who are hard-hearted to Christs Poor! You may as well extract Oil out of a Flint, as the Golden Oil of Charity out of their hearts. *Dives* denied *Lazarus* a Crumb of Bread, and *Dives* was denied a drop of Water.

9. He who Fears God had rather dis-

displease man than God. *Exod. i. 17.*
The Midwives Feared God, and did not as the King commanded, but saved the Men-children alive. What, not obey the Kings Command! How could this stand with their Allegiance? Very well, because it was an unlawful command. The King bad them put to death the Males of the *Hebrems*, which they durst not doe, for Fear of incurring Gods displeasure. King *Nebuchadnezzar* erected a Golden Image to be worshipped, but the three Children (or rather *Champions*) said, *Be it known unto thee O King, we will not serve thy Gods, or worship thy Golden Image, Dan. 3. 18.* They would rather *burn* than *bow*: He who Fears God, knows it is best to keep in with God; he is the surest Friend, but the sorest Enemy.

10. The Fear of God will make a man Fear these six things.

1. Satans Snares.
2. His own Heart.
3. Death.
4. Judgement.
5. Hell.
6. Heaven.

1. The

1. The Fear of God will make a man afraid of *Satans snares*. He hath the eye of Faith to see these snares, and the wing of Fear to fly from them—*Pedibus Timor addidit alas*—2 Cor. 2. 11.

We are not ignorant of his devices. The word is *voluptas*, subtile Stratagems. Satan is called the *Old Serpent*, Rev. 12. 9. Though he hath lost his Holiness, he hath not lost his Policy: his snares are so Cunningly laid, that without the Guidance of Gods Fear we cannot escape them.

1. One subtil Artifice of Satan is, he baits his Hook with Religion: he can change his Flag, and hang out Christs Colours; here *he Transforms himself into an Angel of light*. The Devil tempts men to Evil, *that Good may come of it*, Rom. 3. 8. He whistles them into the snare of preferment, that hereby they may be in a capacity of doing God more service. The white Devil is worst. Who would suspect Satan when he comes as a *Divine*, and if need be, can quote Scripture?

2. Another snare of Satan is, to tempt to sin under a plea of Necessity. *Lot* offered to expose his Daughters

ters to the lusts of the *Sodomites*, that he might preserve his Angel-guests who were come into his house, *Gen.* 19. 8. Did not Satan instigate him to this? Necessity will not excuse impiety.

3^d. Snare is to Colour over sin with the Pretence of Vertue. *Alcibiades* hung a Curtain curiously embroidered over a foul Picture full of Owls and Satyrs. Satan puts Good names on sin, as Physicians call that Film in the eye which hinders the sight, *a Pearl in the eye*. Satan Colour'd over *Jehu's* Ambition with the Name of Zeal, *2 Km.* 10. 16. He makes men believe Revenge is Valour, Covetousness Frugality: as if one should write *balm-water* upon a glass of Poyson.

4th. Snare of Satan is, to carry on his mischievous designs under a pretence of Friendship. He puts off his Lions Skin, and comes in Sheeps Clothing *. Thus Satan came to Christ; *Command that these Stones be made bread*, *Mat.* 4. 3. As if he had said, I see thou art Hungry, I therefore out of Pity Counsel thee to get something to eat, *turn stones to bread* that thy hunger may be satisfied: but Christ spied

† *Antonini*
blandimen-
ta magis
timebantur
quam ira-
cundia.

spied the Serpent in the Temptation and repulsed him. Thus Satan came to *Eve* under the Notion of a Friend. Eat, saith he, of the Tree in the midst of the Garden, *Ye shall not dye, ye shall be as Gods*, Gen. 3. 4, 5. As if he had said, I perswade you only to that which will put you into a better condition than now ye are; eat of the *Tree of knowledge* and it will make you Omniscient. What a kind Devil was here! but *Eve* found a Worm in the Apple. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*—*.

* *Ving.*
Æn. 2.

5th. Snare, if Satan cannot take a Christian off from duty, he will put him on too far in duty. Humiliation is a duty, but Satan suggests that the Soul is not humbled enough: and indeed he never thinks it humbled enough till it despairs. Satan comes thus to a man: Thy sins have bin great, and thy Sorrow should be proportionable; But is it so? canst thou say thou hast bin as great a Mourner as thou hast bin a Sinner? what is a drop of Sorrow to a Sea of Sin? This is laid only as a Snare: the subtil enemy would have a Christian weep himself

self blind, and in a desperate humour throw away the Anchor of Hope. And if Satan hath such fallacies, and as a *Decoy* draws so many Millions into his snares, is there not cause of jealous fear lest we should be trappan'd? The fear of God will make us Fear Hells stratagems. Satans *snares* are worse than his *darts*.

2. The Fear of God will make a man afraid of his *own Heart*. Luther used to say, he feared his Heart more than the Pope or Cardinals, Jer. 17. 9. *The Heart is deceitful above all things.*

1. It is *deceitful*.

* עקב.

The word signifies, it is a *Jacob**, or Supplanter. As *Jacob* supplanted his brother, and got away the blessing; so our Hearts would supplant and beguile us.

2. *Above all things.*

There is deceit in Weights, deceit in Friends; but the Heart hath an art of deceiving beyond all†. In the best hearts there is some fallaciousness. *David* was upright in all things, *save only in the matter of Uriah*, 1 King 15. 5. A Godly man Knowing there is a spice of this deceit in his Heart,
Fears

† *Multa sunt in animo latibilia,*
Cicero.

Fears himself. The flesh is a Bosom-Traitor. No man can believe what evil is in his Heart. 2 *Kin.* 8. 12. *Is thy Servant a Dog?* Hazael could not believe his Heart had bin big of such Monsters. If one had come to *Noah* and said, thou wilt be drunk shortly; he would have said, *Is thy Servant a Dog?* No man knows what is in his breast, or what scandal he may fall into if God leaveth him. Christ warns his own Apostles to *take heed of surfeiting and drunkenness*, Luk. 21. 34. A Godly man therefore fears his Heart with a Fear of Caution and jealousy. The Heart is not only *stubborn*, but *subtil*. Let us a little Trace this Impostor, and see if there be not cause to fear it. The heart shows it's deceitfulness about

1. Things Sinful.
2. Things Sacred.

1. The Heart shows it's deceitfulness about things *sinful*; this deceit is
 1. In hiding of sin, as *Rahab* hid the spies in the flax, Josh. 2. 6. So the Heart Hides sin: and how doth it hide it?
 Just

Just as *Adam* hid himself under fig-leaves, so the Heart hides sin under the figleaves of excuses. It was done against the will, or in a Passion; or it was long of others: *Aaron* laid his sin in making the Golden calf upon the people, *Exo.* 32. 22. *The people are set on mischief*: And *Adam* tacitly laid his sin upon God himself, *Gen.* 3. 12. *The Woman thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree.* As to say, If thou hadst not given me this tempting woman, I had not eat.

2. The Hearts deceit is seen in Flattering of us, it will make us believe we are not so bad as we are. The Physitian deceives the patient, when he tells him his disease is not so dangerous, yet he is falling into the hands of death. The Heart will tell a man he is free from Theft, when yet he robs others of their Good Name; he is free from Drunkenness, when, though he will not be drunk with Wine, he will be drunk with Passion. Thus the Heart is a flattering Glass, to make one look fairer than he is: and is there not cause to suspect this Impostor?

2. The

2. The Heart shews it's deceitfulness about things *Sacred*; it will be ready to put us off with Counterfeit Grace. Many have bin deceived in taking false Mony, and it is to be feared in taking false Grace.

1. The Heart is ready to deceive with a false *repentance*. A Sinner is troubled a little for *Sin*, or rather, the *consequent* of it, and perhaps sheds a few tears, and now his Heart sooths him up that he is a true Penitent. But every legal terrour is not Repentance, *Acts* 2. 37. *They were pricked in their Heart*: yet after this, *Peter said unto them Repent*, ver. 38. If every slight Trouble for sin were true Repentance, then *Judas* and *Cain* may be listed in the number of penitents. Evangelical Repentance works a change of Heart, *1 Cor.* 6. 11. It produceth Sanctity. But the false penitentiary, though he hath trouble of Spirit, yet no Metamorphise or change. He hath a weeping Eye, but an adulterous Heart. *Ahab* Fasts and puts on sackcloth, but after this, he puts the Prophet *Micaiah* in Prison, *1 Kin.* 22. 27.

F

2. The

2. The Heart is apt to deceive with a false *Faith*, it would put the *dead child* in the room of the *living*. They in the second of *John* are said to *believe*: But Christ did not believe their faith, *John* 2. 24. True Faith, as it casts it self into Christs arms to embrace him, so it casts it self at Christs feet to serve him: But spurious Faith though it be forward to Receive Christs benefits, yet it plucks the *Government from his shoulders*, *Isa.* 9. 6. It would have him a *Priest*, but not upon his *throne*, *Zach.* 6. 13. Thus the Heart is full of fallacies; he who Feels God fears his Heart lest it should rob him of the *blessing*. That saying of *Epicharmus* is Good, *μὴ πιστεύετε ἀλλ' ἰδέτε*, Remember not to trust.

3. The Fear of God will make a man Fear *death*. Death may challenge a part in our Fear. 1. Because it is such a serious thing, it is the in-let to eternity: and puts us into an unalterable estate. 2. Because of it's Proximity: it is nearer to us than we are aware*: it may be within a few hours march of us. God may this night seal a Lease of Ejectment, and say,

* Εγγύς
 ἀπεχθάνομαι
 ἵνα τὸ ἐξ-
 ἄβυσσος. Αἰ-
 ἰός.

say, Give an account of your Stewardship ; and what if death should come before we are ready ? 3. Because after death there is nothing to be done for our Souls, there is no repenting in the Grave, Eccles. 9. 10. *There is no work nor device in the Grave whither thou goest.* So, that death is to be feared with an holy and Religious Fear.

How far may a child of God Fear death? *Quest.*

1. So far as the Fear of Death is a Curben-bit to keep him from Sin. *Ans.* A believer may lawfully make use of all means to deter him from sin. No stronger antidote against sin, saith *Austin*, than the Fear of Death. Am I sinning, and to morrow may be dying?

2. A Child of God may so far Fear death, as it makes him dye to the World. The Fear of death would sound a retreat and call us off from Vanity. What is the world? we must leave it shortly, and all we can purchase is a *burying-place* †.

† Gen. 49.
30.

3. A Child of God may so far Fear death, as this Fear fits him more for death. *Jacob* feared his brother

Esau's coming against him, and he prepared to meet him, he addressed himself to Prayer, *Gen.* 32. 7, 24. So when we Fear deaths coming and we prepare to meet it, we *set our Soul in order*. This is a Good Fear of death.

But this Fear of death in the Godly must be mixed with *hope*. The nature of death to a Believer is quite changed: death is in it self a curse, but God hath turned this Curse into a Blessing. To a Child of God death is not a *destruction* but a *deliverance*. When the Mantle of his flesh drops off, he ascends in a *fiery chariot* to Heaven.

4. The Fear of God will make a man fear *Judgment*. *Anselm* spent most of his thoughts upon the day of Judgment; and *Hierom* thought he alwaies heard that Voice sounding in his ears, *Surgite mortui*, Arise ye dead and come to Judgment*. That there shall be such a day is evident, 1. From Gods Veracity: He who is the Oracle of truth hath asserted it, *Psalms* 96. 13. *For he cometh, for he cometh to Judge the earth*; There is a duplication,
I. To

* Si amor
Dei te non
teneat, ti-
mor Judicis
te terreat.
Hugo.

1. To shew the Certainty *he cometh*, *he cometh*, it is an indubitable Maxim.

2. To shew the Celerity, *he cometh*, *he cometh*, the time draws near, it is almost day-break, and the Judge is ready to take the bench, *Jam. 5. 9.* Gods decree cannot be reversed.

2. There shall be such a day for the Vindication of Gods Justice. Things seem to be carried in the World Partially: the Godly suffer, the Wicked Prosper. Atheists are ready to think God hath cast off the Government of the World, and minds not how things are transacted here below: therefore there must be a judicial Process that God may undeceive the World and set things right.

3. That there shall be such a day is evident by the Principles ingrafted in a natural conscience. When *Paul* reasoned of Judgment to come, *Felix trembled*, *Acts 24. 25.* The Prisoner at bar made the Judge tremble. That a Wicked man dying is so surprized with terrors, whence is this but from a secret apprehension of Judgment ensuing?

It will be a great Assizes, never

F 3

was

was the like seen. 2 Cor. 5. 10. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat.* There is no flying, no absconding, no bribing, no appearing by a Proxy, but all must make their Personal appearance*. They who were above Trial here, and the Law could not reach them, must appear before the Tribunal of Heaven.

* Veniet,
veniet dies
Judicii, ubi
plus vale-
bunt pura
Corda,
quam astu-
ta verba.
Bernard.

Quest.

Who shall be Judge?

Ans.

Jesus Christ, John 5. 22. Acts 17.

31. He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained. In that Christ is called a *Man*, hence the Socinians blasphemously deny the essential Deity of Christ. That he is God, is most clearly evinced from Isaiah 9. 6. Joh. 1. 1. 1 Cor. 8. 6. 1 Joh. 5. 20. *We are in him that is True, even in his Son Jesus Christ, this is the true God.* Christ is *ὁμοῦς*, Consubstantiate with God the Father, Heb. 1. 3. But Christ the Judge is called Man, because he shall Judge the world in a *Visible Shape*. He must be both God and Man: he must be God that he may see mens Hearts: and he must be *man* that he himself may be seen.

What

What a solemn day will this be, when Christ shall sit upon the Bench of Judicature! he will judge *righteously*, *Psalms* 9. 8. Though he himself was wronged, he will do no wrong: And he will judge *Critically*, *Mat.* 3. 12. *Whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor.* He will see what is *Wheat*, what is *Chaff*, who have his *Image* upon him, and who the *mark of the beast*. Sure the Fear of God will cause an holy trembling at the thoughts of this day.

In what sence should those that *Quest.*
Fear God, Fear the day of Judgment?

Not with a Fear of amazement or despondency, for the day of Judgment will be a *Jubile*, a blessed comfortable day to them. The *Thrush* sings at the approach of Rain: so may Believers at the approach of Judgment: Christ who is their *Judge* is their *Advocate*. But, *Answ.*

1. The Godly should so fear Judgment, as every day to renew their Sorrow for Sin. They have sins *quotidiani incurfus*, that creep upon them daily, and they must with *Peter*, weep *bitterly*; they must steep their Souls in the brinish Tears of Repentance: It

would be sad to be found at the last day in any sin unrepented of.

2. The Godly should so Fear the day of Judgment as it makes them afraid of Sins of Omission. The not dressing a wound brings death : the not discharging duty may bring damnation. You may read the solemn Process at the last day, *Mat. 25. 42. I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat, naked and ye clothed me not, sick and in Prison and ye Visited me not.* The charge here brought in, is for sins of Omission. Christ doth not say, Ye took away my meat from me, but, Ye gave me no meat ; He saith not, Ye put me in prison, but, Ye visited me not. The sins of Omission condemned them. Not praying in the family, not sanctifying the Sabbath, not giving Almes, will be the fatal Inditement.

3. The Godly should so far Fear the day of Judgment, as it makes them afraid of dissembling in Religion. For at that day false hearts will be unmasked. Why did *Paul* walk with such integrity ? *2 Thes. 2. 10 Ye are witnesses and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved our selves*

selves among you. What was the cause of this? sure a Fear of the Judgment day approaching, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* The word in the original is *ᾠμολογήσονται*, we must be made manifest, our hearts must be laid open before Men and Angels. Such is the Witchcraft of Hypocrisie that it is hard in this life to know who is false, and who is sincere; but shortly there will be a full discovery. 'Tis good for Gods people so to Fear Judgment, as it makes them strive against prevarication and Hypocrisie: for then the Hypocrite will be found out.

5. The Fear of God makes a man Fear Hell. Hell is called *the place of Torment*, Luke 16. 28. Not only flagitious Sinners, but such as Fear God ought to Fear Hell, Luke 12. 4. *I say unto you my friends, Fear him who hath power to cast into Hell*.*

**Descendamus in infernum viventes, ne descendamus morientes.* Bern.

How far should Gods people Fear Hell? *Quest.*

Not so as to let go their Hope. A Mariner fears a Storm, but not so as to throw away his Anchor. Such as Fear God should Fear Hell four wayes.

1. They

1. They should fear Hell *tantum* *meritum*, as that which they have deserved. Their sins have merited Hell. Wo to the Holyest man alive if God should weigh him in the ballance of his Justice.

2. They who Fear God ought so far to Fear Hell, as it is a means to make them shake off Spiritual sloth. This disease is apt to seize upon Gods own people: the *Wise Virgins Slumbered*, Mat. 25. 5. Now so far as the fear of Hell is an alarm or Watch-bell to awaken the Godly out of security, and make them run faster to Heaven, so far it is a good and blessed Fear.

3. The Fear of Hell is so far Good in the Godly, as it makes them afraid of being in the number of those who shall go to Hell. There are certain Persons in danger of Hell. 1. Who have all their Heaven in this Life, *Isa. 47. 8. Thou that art given to pleasure. Epicures* swim in sensual delights; they had rather displease God than deny the flesh: these shall take up their quarters in Hell; *Isa. 22. 12, 13. In that day did the Lord of Hosts call*

to

to weeping, and behold joy and Gladness, eating Flesh, and drinking Wine: surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you dye, saith the Lord. That is, this Sin shall not be done away by any Sacrifice.

2. They are in danger to be cast into Hell who live in the Sin of Adultery†; they who burn in lust shall burn in Hell: 2 Pet. 2. 9. The Lord knows how to reserve the unjust to be punished; *uandisa se*, but chiefly them that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness. See the corruption of mans nature! If God had made all common, he would have sought an enclosure; and now God hath made an enclosure, he endeavours to lay all common. Instead of drinking Water out of his own Cistern, he loves stolen Waters*. The same Latine word *præsepe* signifies a Stable, and a Whore-house: both are for Beasts.

3. They are like to go to Hell, who by giving bad Example cause others to Sin. Bad example like the Plague is catching. Great men are Glasses which the common people dress themselves by†. Such as give bad example

† Prov. 22.
14.

* Prov. 9.
17.

† *Magis in-
tuentur
quid fecerit
Jupiter,
quam quid
docuit, Pla-
to, Aug.*

ple have not only their own sins, but the sins of others to answer for: and that doubtless was the reason why *Dives* intreated *Abraham* that one might go from the Dead to Preach to his Brethren, *Luk.* 16. 27. Not that *Dives* had love to their Souls, but it was because while he was alive he had occasioned his Brethrens sins by his Wicked example, and he knew that their coming to Hell would encrease his Torment.

4. They are like to go to Hell who live and dye in the contempt of Gods Word. Ministers have preached till the bellows are burnt, their Vitals wasted, but men stop their Ears and harden their Hearts*, *Zach.* 7. 12. They make their Heart as an Adamant. Hardness of Heart lies in the insensibleness of the Conscience†, and the inflexibleness of the Will*. Obdurate Sinners shake out the Arrow of Conviction, Scorn Reproof. When the Prophet cried to the *Altar of Stone* it rent, *1 King.* 13. 2. But Sinners Hearts rend not; these are like to have the Wrath of God flame about their Ears, * *Thef.* 1. 8. The Lord Jesus shall be reveal-

* *Primum est*
quod non
cedit tactui.

† *Ephes.* 4.
19.

* *Jer.* 44.
16, 17.

revealed from Heaven in flaming fire, taking Vengeance on them who obey not the Gospel.

5. They shall go to Hell, who fall away Finally, *Mat. 13. 6. Because they had no root they withered.* Flowers in a Waterpot will keep Green and fresh a while, but having no root wither. *Demas* and *Julian* made a fair show a while, but ended as the Silkworm, which after all her Curious Spinning, at last becomes a Common fly. *Heb. 10. 26. If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for sin.* Thus we see who are like to be thrown into Hell: Now it is good for the Godly so to Fear Hell, as to fear to be in the number of those who shall go to Hell.

4. The Fear of Hell is so far good in the Godly, as it is a Fear mixed with Rejoycing, *Psalms 2. 11. Rejoyce with trembling.* A Believers Fear of Hell must be like the Fear of the two *Maries* going from the Sepulcher, *Mat. 28. 8. They departed from the Sepulcher with Fear and great Joy: Fear, because they had seen an Angel; and Joy,*

Joy, because Christ was risen. So must the Godly look on Hell, with Fear and Joy; Fear, because of the Fire; Joy, because Christ hath freed them from it. A man that stands upon an high rock, Fears when he looks down into the Sea, yet Rejoyceth that he is not there strugling with the Waves: So a Child of God when he looks down into Hell by Contemplation may fear because of the dreadfulnes of the Torment; yet this Fear should be mingled with Joy, to think he shall never come there. *Jesus hath delivered him*

† 1 Thes. *from Wrath to come**.
1. 10.

6. The Fear of God will make a man Fear *Heaven*. You may say, that is strange, rather Hope for Heaven; nay, a Regenerate person is to Fear Heaven lest he fall short of it. *Hebr.*

4. 1. *Let us Fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it**.

* *Uspeniz-
vols.*

'Tis a Metaphor taken from Racers, who Growing weary and lagging behind come short of the prize. Who had more hope of Heaven than St. Paul? yet he was not without his Fears, 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keep under my Body*

Body, lest when I have preached to others
I my self should be a Cast-away. And
well may he who shall go to Heaven
Fear lest he miss of it, if you consi-
der,

1 It is Possible for many who make
a Splendid Profession to lose Heaven.
What think you of the *Foolish Virgins*?
They are called *Virgins* because they
were not tainted with any gross Sin;
yet these Virgin-Professors were shut
out, *Mat.* 25. 10. *Balaam* a Prophet,
Judas an Apostle, both cashiered. We
have seen some Ships have had glo-
rious names given them, the *Good-speed*,
the *Hope*, the *Safe-guard*, yet cast
away at Sea.

2. It is possible to come near to
Heaven, yet fall short of it, *Mark* 12.

34. *Thou art not far from the King-
dom of God*; yet he was not near
enough. Men may countenance the
Ministry of the Word, have their Af-
fections moved at an Ordinance, and
in outward show out-go the Children
of God*; yet not having the Oyl of ^{* Num.}
Sincerity in their Vessels, they may ^{23. 1, 2.}
be frustrated of happiness: And how
dismal is that, to lose God, to lose
their

their Souls, to lose their Hopes ! The Millions of Tears shed in Hell are not sufficient to bewail the loss of Heaven. Well may such as have Heaven in them Fear their coming short of it. Thus much for the Use of Trial.

Quest. How shall we arrive at this Blessed Fear?

Answ. 1. Let us set God ever in our eye, study his Immensity. He is *אל שרי* God Almighty, Gen. 17. 1. He gives laws to the Angels, binds the Consciences of men, *cuts off the Spirit of Princes*, Psalm 76. 12. The Thoughts of Gods incomprehensible Greatness would strike an Holy awe into our Hearts. *Elijah* wrap'd his face in a Mantle when Gods Glory passed by. The reason men Fear not God, is because they entertain slight thoughts of him. *Psalm* 40. 21. *Thou thoughtest I was such an one as thy self.*

2. Let us pray for this Fear of God, which is the Root of all Holiness, and the Mother of all Wisdom. *Psalm* 86. 11. *Unite my Heart to Fear thy Name* ; the Lord hath Promised to put his Fear in our Heart, *Jer.* 32. 40. Let us pray over this Promise :
while

while some pray for Riches, and others for Children, let us pray for an Heart to Fear God.

To conclude this, you who have this Fear planted in your Souls, bleſs God for it, *Pſalm 135. 20. Ye that Fear the Lord bleſs the Lord.* God hath done more for you than if he had made you Kings and Queens, and cauſed you to *ride upon the High places of the Earth.* He hath enriched you with that Jewel which he beſtows only upon the Elect.

O ſtand upon Mount *Gerizim* bleſſing. The Fear of God is an Immortal Seed ſpringing up into Glory, *Pſalm 22. 23. Ye that fear the Lord praife him.* Begin the Work of Heaven now, be Spiritual Quiriſters: ſound forth Holy Doxologies and Triumphs; ſay as *David*, *Pſalm 71. 8. Let my Mouth be filled with thy Praiſe, and with thy Honour all the day.* God hath but little praife in the world: Who ſhould pay him this Quit-rent if not they that fear him?

G

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Shewing the first Character in special of the Godly, namely, Speaking of God.

2. **H**AVING done with the Character of the Godly in General, I proceed next to their Special Characters. 1. *They spake often one to another.* When the Wicked said, It is Vain to serve God, then they that feared the Lord *spake often one to another.* The meaning of this word, *they spake often*, is, they did discourse Religiously together, their Tongues were Divinely tuned by the Holy Ghost.

Dof. Christians when they meet together should use holy Conference. This is not only an advice, but a charge, Deu. 6. 6. *These words shall be in thy Heart, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy House, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou lyesst down, and when thou risest up.* Indeed

deed where there is *Gratia infusa*, it will be *effusa*; Grace changeth the Language, and makes it Spiritual. When the Holy Ghost came upon the Apostles, *they spake with other Tongues*, Act. 2. 4. Grace makes Christians speak with Other Tongues. A good Christian hath not only the Law of God in his *Heart*, Psalm 37. 31. but in his *Tongue*, ver. 30. The body is the *Temple* of God, 1 Cor. 6. 19. The *Tongue* is the Organ in this Temple, which sounds in Holy discourse, Prov. 10. 20. *The tongue of the Just is as Choice Silver*. He drops Silver sentences, enriching others with Knowledge, Mat. 12. 35. *A Good man out of the Good treasure of his Heart bringeth forth good things*. In his heart is a Treasure of Goodness, and this is not like a bag of Money Sealed, but he brings something out of the Treasure within to the enriching of others. Grace is of the Nature of fire, which will not be pent up: like new Wine it will have Vent*. There is a principle within *constrains* to holy Conference, Job 32. 18. *The Spirit within me constraineth me*.

* Acts 4
20.

CHAP. VI.

Containing the Applicatory part.

¹ Use.
Inform.

IT shews the Genius and temper of true Saints, *they speak often one to another*; their Lips drop as an Honey-comb. A man is known what country he belongs to by his Language. He who belongs to the *Jerusalem* above speaks the *Language of Canaan*; none of Gods children are dumb; their mouth is a *well-spring of Wisdom*, Prov. 18. 4.

² Use.
Reproof.
¹ Br.

Here I may draw up a bill of Indictment against five sorts of Persons.
1. Such as are silent in matters of Religion. They would be counted Good, but he must have good eyes that can see it. I know not whether it be Ignorance or Bashfulness that makes good discourse waved. Many are so mute in Religion as if their Tongues did *cleave to the roof of their Mouth*: had they any love to God, or had they ever tasted how sweet the Lord is, their

their mouth would *talk of his Righteousness*, Psalm 71. 24. Friends, what should we mind but Salvation? what are the things of this world? they are neither *Entia* *, nor *Manentia* *. Do not we see men heap up Riches, and on a sudden, death as Gods Serjeant Arrests them? What should we talk of but the things *Pertaining to the Kingdom of God*? Let this cause blushing among Christians, that their meetings are so unprofitable, they leave God out of their discourse. Why is there no good conference? Have you so much Knowledge that you need not have it encreased? Have you so much Faith that you need not have it Strengthened? Silence in Religion is a loud sin. We read of one who was possessed with a *Dumb Devil*, Mark 9. 12. How many are *Spiritually* possessed with a Dumb Devil!

*Pro. 23. 5
†1Cor. 7. 3.

It is a rebuke to such as when they meet together, instead of speaking of Heaven, they have idle frothy discourse*. They do λαλῶν but no λέγον, as *Plutarch* said of *Alcibiades*. Their Lips do not drop as an Honey-comb, but run as a Spout; their speaking is

2 Branch.
*Folius le-
viora cadu-
cis verba,
Ovid.

G 3

Just

Just like a Childs scribbling, *Psalms* 12. 2. *They speak Vanity every one with his Neighbour*. If Christ should ask some as he did the two Disciples going to *Emaus*, *Luk.* 24. 17. *What manner of Communications have you as you walk*, they could not say as they did, concerning *Jesus of Nazareth*; no, perhaps about *Toyes*, or new *Fashions*. If Idle words must be accounted for, *Mat* 12. 36. Lord, what an account will some have to give!

- 3 *Branch*. It reproves the Avaritious Person, who instead of speaking of Heaven, talks of nothing but the World: the Farmer speaks of his Plough and Yoak of Oxen, the Tradesman of his Wares and Drugs; but not a word of God. *John* 3. 31. *He that is of the Earth speaketh of the Earth*. Many are like the Fish in the Gospel that *had Money in it's Mouth*, *Mat.* 12. 27. They talk only of Secular things, as if they Imagined to fetch happiness out of that Earth which God hath Cursed. *Seneca* being asked of what Countrey he was, answered he was *κοσμοπολίτης* a Citizen of this World: we may know many to be Citizens of this World,

World, their *speech bewrayeth* them.—
O curvæ in terras animæ, et cælestium
inanes.

4. It reproves them who do indeed speak often to one another but in a bad sense. 1. They speak one to another in *hasty* words. Their words should be like the *Waters of Shiloah that go softly*, but too often they are fierce and Pungent.* Water when it is *Magnæque
iræ flam-
mæ æstus. hot soon boils over; when the Heart is heated with anger it soon boils over in furious speeches, *Jam. 3. 6.* Passion transports. Many curse in their anger. The Tongue is made in the fashion of a Sword, and it cuts like a Sword: Angry words often prejudice him that utters them: *Rehoboam* with one churlish word lost ten tribes. A fiery Spirit is unsuitable to the Master we serve, the *Prince of Peace*; and to his *Ambassage*, the *Gospel of Peace*. Such whose tongues are set on fire, let them take heed they do not one day in Hell desire a *drop of Water* to Cool their Tongue.

2. They speak one to another in a bad sense who Murmure and complain one to another; they do not com-

plain of their *Sins*, but their *Wants*. Murmuring proceeds from unbelief, *Psalms* 106. 24. *They believed not his word but murmured*. When men distrust Gods Promises, they murmur at his Providences: this is a Sin God can hardly bear, *Numb.* 14. 27. *How long shall I bear with this People that murmur against me?* *Israels* speeches were Venomous, and God punished them with Venomous Serpents, *1 Cor.* 10. 10.

3. They speak one to another in a bad fence, who vent themselves in filthy scurrilous Language. The Heart is a Vessel full of Wickedness, and the Tongue sets it a-broach. When the Face breaks out in Sores and Pimples, it shews the Blood is corrupt: when men break forth in unsavoury speeches it shews the Heart is Profane. *1 Cor.* 15. 35. *Evil communication corrupteth good manners*. We read that the Lips of the Leper were to be covered, *Levit.* 13. 45. It were happy if we had such Magistrates as would by their Authority cover the unclean Lips of these Lepers.

4. They speak one to another in a bad fence, who instead of seasoning their

their words with Grace, mix them with Oaths. Swearers rend and tear Gods Name, and like mad Dogs fly in the face of Heaven, Jer. 23. 10. *Because of swearing the Land mourns.* Some think it the *Grace of speech* to interlard every sentence with an Oath; as if they would go to Hell Genteelly. But saith one, it is my Custom to Swear. Is this an *excuse* or an *aggravation* of the sin? If a Malefactor should be arraigned for Robbery, and he should say to the Judge spare me for it is my custom to rob on the High way, the Judge would say, thou shalt the rather dye. For every Oath that a man Swears, God puts a drop of Wrath into his Vial.

5. It reproves them who instead of speaking in an holy manner one to another, speak one of another;
 1. *In censuring*, some make it a part of their Religion to Descant and Criticize upon others. They do not imitate their graces but reflect upon their failings. God grant professors may wash their hands of this. Were peoples hearts more humble, their Tongues would
 be

be more charitable. 'Tis the sign of an Hypocrite to censure others and commend himself.

2. They speak one of another in *slandering*: Psalm 50. 20. *Thou sittest and slanderest thy own Mothers son.* Slandering is when we speak to the prejudice of another, and speak that which is not true. Worth is blasted by slander. Holiness it self is no shield from this sin. The Lambs Innocency will not preserve it from the Wolf. *Job calls slandering the scourge of the Tongue*, Job 5. 21. You may imite a man and never touch him.

* *Majora
sunt lingue
Vulnera
quam gla-
dii*, Aug.

A slanderer wounds anothers fame, and no Physitian can heal these wounds*. The *Eye* and the *Name* are two tender things. God takes it ill at our hands to caluminate others, especially to asperse those who help to keep up the credit of Religion. *Num. 12. 8. Were not ye afraid to speak against my Servant Moses?* what my Servant, who hath wrought so many Miracles, whom I have spoken with in the Mount Face to Face, were not ye afraid to speak against him? The Greek word *slanderer* signifies *Devil*†. This is

† 1 Tim.
3. 11.

is the Devils proper Sin, he is *the* accuser of the Brethren, Rev. 12. 10. He doth not commit Adultery, but he bears false Witness. The slanderer may be indicted for *Clipping*, he clips his Neighbours credit to make it weigh lighter. This our nature is prone to; but remember, it is as well a sin in Gods account, to break the *Ninth* Commandment, as the *Eighth*.

Put this Great duty in Practice, ^{3 Use.} imitate these Holy ones in the Text, ^{Exhortation.} *They spake often one to another. Hierom* thinks they did speak something in defence of the Providence of God, they vindicated God in his dealings, and exhorted one another not to be discouraged at the Virulent speeches of the Wicked, but still hold on a course of Piety. Thus (Christians) when you meet, give one anothers Souls a visit, drop your Knowledge, impart your experiences each to other, *Psalms* 66. 16. *Sampson* having found Hony did not only eat of it himself, but carried it to his Father and Mother, *Judg.* 14. 9. Have you Tasted the Hony of the word? let others have a Tast with you. He who hath bin in a

a Perfumers shop doth not only himself partake of those sweet smells, but some of the perfume sticks to his cloaths, so that those who come near him partake of those perfumes: so having our selves perceived the sweet Savour of Christs Oyntments, we should let others partake with us, and by our Heavenly discourse, diffuse the perfume of Religion to them, *Col. 4. 6. Let your words be seasoned with Salt*: let Grace be the salt which seasons your Words and makes them Savoury. Christians should take all occasions of Good discourse when they walk together, and sit at Table together. This makes their eating and drinking be *to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. What makes it a *Communion of Saints* but Good conference?

But some may say they are barren of matter, and know not what to speak of?

No, have you walked so often through the field of Scripture, yet gathered no ears of Corn? have not you matter enough in the Word to furnish you with discourse? Let me suggest a few things to you. When you meet

meet speak one to another of the *Promises*. No Honey so sweet, as that which drops from a Promise. The promises are the support of Faith, the springs of joy, the Saints Royal Charter. Are you Citizens of Heaven, and not speak of your Charter? Speak of the preciousness of Christ: he is *Beauty* and *Love*; he hath laid down his blood as the *price* or price of your Redemption. Have you a friend that hath redeemed you; and never speak of him? Speak one to another of Sin, what a deadly evil it is, how it hath infected your Virgin-nature, and turned it into a lesser Hell. Speak of the *Beauty of Holiness*, which is the Souls Embroidery, filling it with such Oriental splendor as makes God and Angels fall in love with it. The Graces are (as *Damascen* saith) the Sacred Characters and Impressions of the Divine nature*. Speak one to another of your Souls: enquire whether they are in health. Speak about Death and Eternity: can you belong to Heaven and not speak of your Country? Speak one to another of the *Times*, wherein God is the Greatest sufferer:

let

* *Deus
quod
gratia
est
in
soulis*

let your hearts bleed for his dishonours. Thus you see here is matter enough for Holy conference.

Why then do you not set good discourse on Foot? I perswade my self one main reason of the decay of the Power of Godliness is want of Christian conference: people when they meet talk of Impertinencies, but God and Heaven are left out of their discourse. That I may perswade you in your converses to put in a word about your Souls, let me offer these few things to your consideration.

1. It was the practice of the Saints of old. *Elijah*, and *Elisba* went on talking good discourse till the Chariot of Heaven came to part them, 2 Kin. 2.

11. *Dauids* Tongue was Tuned to the Language of Canaan, Psalm 71. 24. *My Tongue shall talk of thy Righteousness.* The Primitive Christians into whatever company they came, were speaking of a Glorious Kingdom they expected, insomuch that some thought they were ambitious of worldly honour; which made *Justin Martyr* Apologize for them, that the Kingdom they looked for was not of this World,

World, but a Kingdom with Christ in Heaven. *Jerom* saith of some of the Roman Ladies, They did spend much of their time in communing together, and they would not let him alone, for asking him Questions about their Souls.

2. We are bid to *Redeem* the Time, *Eph.* 5. 16. The Poets painted time with Wings, because it flies so fast—*Volat ambiguus mobilis alis hora*—Time lost had need be redeemed ; and is there any better way to redeem time, than to improve it in trading for Heaven, and speaking of God and our Souls ?

3. Jesus Christ hath set us a Pattern : his words were perfumed with Holiness, *Luke* 4. 22. *All bare him witness, and Wondred at the Gracious words which proceeded out of his Mouth.* Christ had Grace poured into his Lips, *Psalms* 45. 2. In all companies he set good discourse on foot. When he sate on *Jacobs Well* he falls into an Heavenly discourse with the Woman of *Samaria* about the Water of Life, *John* 4. 14. And so when *Levi* made him a Feast, *Luke* 5.—He feasts him again with Heavenly discourse. And no sooner
was

was Christ risen from the Grave, but he was *speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*, Acts

1. 3. The more Spiritual we are in our speeches, the more we resemble Christ: should not the Members be like the Head? Christ will not be our Saviour, unless we make him our Pattern.

4. Good discourse would prevent sinful discourse. Much sin passeth in ordinary talk, as Gravel and Mud pass along with the Water. How many are Guilty of Tongue-sins! Good discourse would prevent evil, as labour prevents idleness. By inuring our Tongues to the Heavenly Dialect, the Devil would not have so much Power over us.

5. We may guess at mens Hearts by their common discourse. Words are the Looking-glass of the Mind*. As you may Judge of a Face by the glass whether it be fair or foul; So by the words we may Judge of the Heart. A lascivious Tongue shews a lustful heart, an earthly Tongue a covetous heart; a Gracious Tongue, a Gracious Heart. The Ephraimites were known by their Pronunciation, saying Sibboleth for

*Verba sunt
speculum
mentis.
Bernard.

for *Shibboleth*, Judg. 12. 6. So by the manner of our speech we may be known who we belong to. The Tongue is the Index of the Heart. If you broach a Vessel that which is within will come out; by that which comes out of the Mouth, you may Guess what is within in the Heart, *Luke 6 45. Out of the abundance of the Heart the mouth speaketh.*

6. Good discourse is beneficial, *Job 6. 23. How forcible are rights words?* A word spoken in season may make such a powerful impression upon anothers Heart as may do him Good all his Life. One single coal is apt to dye, but many coals put together keep in the heat. Christians by their Heavenly talk do ἀναζωοποιῶν, blow up one anothers Grace into a flame. *Monica Austins* Mother, hearing others discourse of Heaven, was greatly affected and cryed out, What do I do here? Why is my Soul held any longer with this Earthen fether of my Flesh? When the Daughters of *Jerusalem* had conversed a while with the Spouse, and had heard her describe Christs admirable beauty, their Affections began

H

to

to be enflamed, and they would seek him with her, *Cant. 6. 1. Whither is thy beloved gone O thou fairest among women, that we may seek him with thee?* A Christian by divine discourse may enlighten another when he is ignorant, warm him when he is Frozen, comfort him when he is sad, confirm him when he is wavering. *Latimer* was much strengthened by discourse with *Mr Bilney* in Prison, and hearing his confession of Faith *. A good life adorns Religion, a good Tongue Propagates it. When the Apostle would have us edifie one another, what better way could he prescribe than this, to have such Holy speeches proceed out of our Mouths as might Minister Grace unto the hearers? *Eph. 4. 29.*

* *Acts and Mon.*

7. We must be accountable to God for our speeches. Words are judged light, but they weigh heavy in Gods Balance; by our words we shall be either saved or damned, *Mat. 12. 37. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* If our words have been seasoned with Grace, then the acquitting sentence is like to go on our side.

8. Good

8. Good discourse is a Christians Honour. The Tongue is called our Glory, Psalm 30. 12. Because it is the Instrument of Glorifying God. When our Tongues are out of tune in murmuring, then they are not our Glory; but when these Organs sound in Holy discourse, then our Tongues are our Glory.

9. Good discourse will be a means to bring Christ into our company. While the two Disciples were conferring about the death and Sufferings of Christ, Jesus Christ himself came among them, Luke 24. 15. *While they communed together, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.* When bad discourse is set on Foot, Satan draws near, and makes one of the Company; but when Good discourse is promoted, Jesus Christ draws near.

Let all that hath bin said excite good conference: certainly, there is no better way than *this* to *encrease* our Stock of Grace. Others by spending Grow Poor; but the more we spend our selves in Holy discourse, the richer we Grow in Grace, as the *Widows Oyl* by Pouring out encreased.

CHAP. VII.

Means conducing to Holy Conference.

IF it be asked how may Good conference be arrived at? 1. If you would be discursive in Religion, get your minds well furnished with knowledge. Hereby, you will have a Treasure to fetch from, *Job 38. 18. I am (saith Elihu) full of matter.* Some are backward to speak of Good for want of matter: the empty Vessel cannot run. If you would have your Tongues run fluently in Religion, they must be fed with a spring of knowledge, *Col. 3. 16. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.* In one of the Miracles that Christ wrought, he first caused the Water-pots to be filled with Water, and then saith he, *Draw out now,* *John 2. 8.* So we must first have our Heads filled with Knowledge, and then we shall be able to draw out to others in Good discourse.

2. If

2. If you would discourse readily in the things of God, make Religion your delight. What men delight in, they will be speaking of: the *sensualist* speaks of his sports; the worldling of his rich purchase. Delight makes the Tongue as the *Pen of a ready writer*. The Spouse being delighted and inamoured with Christs beauty, could not conceal her self; she makes an elegant and Pathetical Oration in the commendation of Christ, *Cant. 5. 10. My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*

3. Pray that God will both Gift and Grace you for Christian conference, *Psalms 51. 15. Lord open thou my Lips.* Satan hath lock'd up mens Lips, pray that God will open them. Perhaps you pray that you may Believe in Christ, but do you pray that you may Confess him, and not be ashamed to speak of him before others? *Psalms 119. 46. I will speak of thy Testimonies before Kings, and not be ashamed.* To end this, let me briefly insert two Cautions.

1. Not but that it is lawful to confer of worldly Negotiations sometimes; 1 Caution.

times ; Traffick requires conference : But with this *proviso*, that we should shew more Delectation and Earnestness in speaking of Spiritual things, than Earthly ; Remembring the Soul is far more Valuable than the World.

Second
Caution.

2. When persons speak of Religion let it not be for any Sinister Unworthy end, not for *Ostentation*, but *Edification* ; and then having your aim right, speak of the things of God with Life and Affection, that others may perceive you feel those Truths which you speak.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing the Second Character in Special of the Godly, namely, thinking of God.

2 Special
Character.

2. **T**HE Second Character of the Godly *in special* is, *they thought upon Gods name* ; these Saints when they were together did *speak* of God, when they were alone they did *think* of God ;

God; *That Thought upon his name.*

What is meant by Gods name?

Quest.

1. By the Name of God is meant his *Essence*; Gods Name is put for God himself.

Answ.

2. By the Name of God is meant his Glorious *Attributes*, which are the several Letters of his Name.

3. By the Name of God is meant his Worship and Ordinances where his Name is called upon, *Jer. 7. 12. Go ye unto my Place which was in Shiloh where I set my Name at first: That is, where I first set up my Publick worship.*

Now this Name of God, the Saints in the Text did contemplate, *they Thought upon his Name.* Thoughts are the first-born of the Soul, the conceptions of the mind, the immediate Fruit and Issue of a rational being. Thoughts are the *Images* of things in the Fancy *. These devout Souls in the Text were chiefly busying their Thoughts about God and Heaven.

* *Cogitationes sunt rerum imagines.* Moller.

It is the inseparable sign of a Godly man to imploy his chief Thoughts about God, *Prov. 12. 5. The Thoughts of the Righteous are Right.* That is

Doct.

* עץ

they are set upon the Right Object. 'Tis natural to Think. Thoughts fly out of the Mind, as Sparks out of a Furnace. The Hebrew word, for a *Thought*, signifies *the Boughs of a Tree**; Because Thoughts shoot out from our Minds, as branches do from a Tree. 'Tis I say natural to Think, but it is not natural to Think of God, this is proper to a *Saint*: his Thoughts are Sublime and Seraphical, they fly to Heaven. The Mind is a Mint-house where Thoughts are Minted. *David* minted Golden Cogitations, *Psalms* 139. 18. *I am still with thee*. That is (as learned *Ainsworth* expounds it) by Divine Contemplation. Thoughts are Travellers in the Soul. *David's* Thoughts kept Heaven-road, *Psalms* 73. 23. *I am continually with thee*. As the Mariners needle turns to the North-pole: so a Saints Thoughts are still pointing towards God.

Quest.

Whence is it that the Saints thoughts mount up to God?

Answ.

There will be this Thinking on God,
1. From those intrinsecal Perfections which are in him. The loveliness of the Object attracts the thoughts: God
is

is the supream Good. There is nothing
but God worth thinking on*. *Psal. 119.* *Quid al-*
57. *Thou art my Portion, O Lord.* Will *tra querit*
not a mans thoughts run upon his *cui omnia*
Portion? A gracious Soul hath found *suis condi-*
Pleasure in thinking on God, *Psal. 63.* *tor sit?*
5, 6. He hath had those Transfigura-
tions on the Mount, those Illapses of
the Spirit, those Incomes of Gods
Love, those prælibations and foretastes
of glory, that he cannot keep his
thoughts off from God: To hinder
him from thinking on God, is to bar
him of all his Pleasure.

2. There will be thinking on God
from the powerful Operations of the
Holy Ghost. We cannot of our selves
think a good thought, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* but
the Spirit elevates and fixeth the heart
on God. *Ezek. 3. 14. The Spirit lifted*
me up. When you see the Iron move
upward, there hath been some Load-
stone drawing it: so when the thoughts
move upwards towards God, the Spi-
rit hath, as a divine Load-stone, drawn
them.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Containing a sharp Redargution.

1 Use.
Reproof.
1 Branch.

* *Dei nun-
quam recov-
datur, ita
se gerit ac
si non esset
Deus. Ma-
riana.*

* *Quod effi-
cit Tale, id
est magis
Tale.*

OUT of the quiver of this Text I may draw several Arrows of Reproof. 1. It reproves such as do not think upon Gods Name. It is the Brand-mark of a Reprobate, *God is not in all his thoughts*, Psalm 10. 4.* He endeavours to expunge and blot God out of his mind: though he draws his Breath from God, yet he doth not think of him: his thoughts shoot in- to the Earth, *Philip. 3. 19.* Had not sinners by their fall lost their Head- piece, they would reason thus with themselves: Sure God is best worth thinking on; is there any excellency in the World? then what is there in God that made it? He gives the Star its beauty, the Flower its fragrancy, Food its suavity; and if there be such deli- ciousness in the Creature, what is in God? He must needs be better than all*. O my Soul, shall I admire the

Drop

Drop and not the *Ocean*? Shall I think of the Workmanship, and not of him that made it? This is the fruit of Original Sin, it hath warped the Soul, and taken it off from the right Object.

It reproves such as indeed think of ² Branch God, but they have not Right Thoughts of him. As the Lord said to *Eliphaz*, Job 42. 7. *Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right*; so some think of God, but they do not think of him *the thing that is right*. 1. They have Low unworthy Thoughts of God, they Fancy God to be like themselves, *Psalms* 50. 21. Men think God is as short-sighted as they, and that he cannot see them through the thick Canopy of the Clouds: but he that makes a Watch knows all the Wheelles and Pins in it, and the Spring which causeth the Motion. God who is ~~κατασκοπος~~ the inspector of the Heart, sees all the intrigues and Private Caballs in the Thoughts*. God knows the true Motion of a false Heart, *Jer.* ^{* Job 42.2. Amos 4.13} 29. 23. *I know and am a witness, saith the Lord.*

2. Men have Injurious Thoughts of God: 1. They deem his wayes unequal,

equal, *Ezek. 18. 25. Is not my way equal?* Some call Gods Providence to the Bar of Reason, and Judge his proceedings excentrick; but God *laies Righteousness to the Plummet, Isa. 28. 17.* His wayes are *secret*, but alwayes *just*. God is most in his way, when we think he is out of his way.

2. They think his wayes are not Profitable, *Mal. 3. 14. What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?* we cannot shew our earnings. These are not *Right Thoughts* of God. Men think him to be an *hard Master*: But God will be in no mans debt, he gives double pay, *Mal. 1. 10. Neither do ye kindle a fire on my Altar for nought.*

3 Branch.

It reproves such as instead of thinking on God, their minds are wholly taken up with Vain Thoughts. Vain Thoughts are the froth of the Brain, *Jer. 4. 14. How long shall Vain Thoughts lodge with thee?* I deny not but Vain Thoughts may sometimes come into the best Hearts, but they have a care to turn them out before night, that they do not Lodge. This denominates a Wicked man, his Thoughts *Dwell* upon Vanity; and well may his Thoughts be said,

said to be Vain, because they do not turn to any profit, *Jer. 16. 19. Vanity, and things wherein there is no Profit.* They are Vain Thoughts which are about Foolish things, and run all into straw. They are Vain Thoughts which do not Better the Heart, nor will give one drop of Comfort at death, *Psalms 146. 4. In that very day his Thoughts perish.* Vain Thoughts are Pernititious, they Fly-blow the Heart and leave an ill tincture behind.

4. It reproveth such as have not only Vain Thoughts, but Vile Thoughts. 4 Branch

1. *Proud Thoughts*, while they view themselves in the Glass of Self-love, they begin to take up Venerable Thoughts of themselves, and so Pride fumes up into their Head and makes them Giddy*.

*Acts 5.35

2. *Impure Thoughts*. They think how to Gratifie their Lusts, they do *πρόβλεπον* *make provision*, or as the word signifies, become *Caterers* for the Flesh, *Rom. 13. 14.*

Sin begins in the Thoughts; first men *Devise* sin, then *Act* it, *Mica. 2.*

2. For instance, would one have preferment: he bethinks himself by what Ladder

Ladder he may climb to Honour. He will Cringe and comply, and lay aside Conscience, and this is the way to rise. Would a man Grow rich: he sets his Thoughts a work how to compass an estate, he will circumvent, and pull down his Soul to build up an estate. Would he wreak his Malice on another; he frames an Engine in his Thoughts to take away his Life: as *Jezabel* (that Painted Harlot) when she would ruine *Naboth*, presently fains a *Sham-Plot* and Subtilly thinks of a way how to dispatch him, *1 King. 21. 9. Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the People, and set two men Sons of Belial to Witness against him, saying, thou didst blaspheme God and the King, and carry him out and stone him.* O the Mischief of Thoughts! A man may Deny God in his Thoughts, *Psalms 14. 1. The Fool hath said in his Heart there is no God.* He may commit Adultery in his Thoughts, *Mat. 5. 28. Whosoever looks on a Woman to Lust after her hath committed Adultery with her in his Heart.* A man may Murder another in his Thoughts, *1 Joh. 3. 15. Whosoever hateth his brother*

brother is a murderer. O how much contemplative wickedness is in the World! Tremble at sinful Thoughts. We startle at Gross sin, but we are not troubled so much for, sinful Thoughts. Know, 1. That sin may be committed in the Thoughts, though it never blossom into outward Act, *Prov. 24. 9. The Thought of Foolishness is sin.* See this in two things.

1. *Envy*, the Jews envied Christ the fame of his Miracles, *Mat. 27. 18. Pilat knew that for envy they had delivered him.* Here was sin committed in the Thoughts: the Jews sinned by envying Christ, though they had never Crucified him.

2. *Discontent*, *Gen. 24. 5. Cain was wroth and his Countenance fell.* He did Malign his Brother, and his thoughts were boiled up to Discontent. Here was sin committed in the thoughts. *Cain* sinn'd by Discontent though he had never Murdered his Brother.

2. God will punish for sinful thoughts. We say Thoughts are free; so they are in mans Court*; but God will punish for Thoughts: it was
 set-

* *Cogitationis poenam in nostro foro nemo luat,* is the Civilian Rule.

set upon *Herods* score, that he thought to have destroyed Christ under a pretence of worshipping him, *Mat.* 2. 8.

Let us be humbled for the sins of our Thoughts, *Prov.* 30. 32. *If thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy Mouth.* That is, humble and abase thy self before the Lord. The best alive had need be humbled for their thoughts.
 1. The *Instability* of their Thoughts. How do the Thoughts Dance up and down in Prayer: like Quick-silver they will not fix. 'Tis hard to tie two Good Thoughts together.

2. The *Impiety* of their Thoughts. In the fairest fruit may be a Worm, and in the best Heart evil Thoughts may arise. Did mens Hearts stand where their faces do, they would blush to look one upon another. Let us I say be deeply humbled for our Thoughts. Let us look up to Christ that he would stand between us and Gods Justice, and that he would intercede for us that the *Thoughts of our Hearts may be forgiven us.*

2 Use.
 Exhortation.

1 Branch.

Let us think of Gods Name; let us lock up our selves with God every day;

day; let our Thoughts get Wings, and with the Birds of Paradise fly up towards Heaven. Christians, look upon that day to be lost, wherein you have not conversed with God in your Thoughts; think of God in your Closet, in your Shop: Trade above the Moon. *Isaac went out into the field to meditate*, Gen. 24. 63. He did take a turn in Heaven by holy Ejaculations. Our Minds should be *steeped* in holy Thoughts. It is not enough to have a few Transient Thoughts of God by the By, but there must be an immoration or staying our Minds on God, till our Hearts are warmed in love to him, and we can say as they, *Luk. 24. 32. Did not our Hearts burn within us?*

But what should be the matter of our holy Musings?

Quest.

1. Think of Gods *Immense Being*. Adore his illustrious Attributes, which are the Beams by which the Divine nature shines forth. Think of Gods Omniscieny: he makes a Curious and Critical descant upon all our Actions, and enters them down into his day-book. Think of Gods Holiness, which

Ans.

I

is

is the most sparkling Jewel of his Crown, *Exod. 15. 11.* Think of Gods *Mercy*: this makes all his other Attributes sweet. Holiness without Mercy, and Justice without Mercy would be terrible. Think of Gods *Veracity*, *Exod. 34. 6. Abundant in Truth*; that is, God will be so far from coming short of his word, that he doth more then he hath said. He shoots beyond the Promise, never short of it.

2. Think of the *Works* of God, *Psalme 77. 12. I will meditate of all thy Works.* Gods works are bound up in three great Volumes, Creation, Redemption, Providence: here is sweet matter for our Thoughts to expatiate upon.

CHAP. X.

Swasives and Incentives to Holy Thoughts.

LET me, to inforce the Exhortation, propound some Swasives and Inducements to be frequent in the Thoughts of God. 1. The end why God

God
ty is
Whe
Imp
side
our
lent
Thou
ry th
given

2.

to G
Chri
venly
Mind
make
Holy
which
so th
Relig
and f

3.

on G
100.
and n
Gods
15. A
Cabin
he P

God

God hath given us this thinking faculty is, that we may think on his Name. When our Cogitations run out in Impertinencies (like water running beside the Mill) we should think with our selves thus: did God give us a Talent to misimploy? did he give us Thoughts that we should think of every thing but him? were these Arrows given us to shoot beside the Mark?

2. If we do not inure our selves to Good thoughts, we cannot be Good Christians. Thinking seriously on Heavenly things, makes them stay in our Mind, causeth delight in them, and makes them Nutritive. Musing on Holy Objects is like concocting food, which turns it to Blood and Spirits: so that without Holy Cogitation, no Religion. Can a man be Religious and scarce ever think of it?

3. We are deeply obliged to think on God. 1. God is our maker, *Psalms* 100. 3. *It is he that hath made us, and not we our selves.* Our bodies are Gods curious needle work, *Psalms* 139. 15. And as God hath wrought the Cabinet, so he hath put a Jewel in it, the *Precious* Soul. Hath God made us,

and shall not we think of him? 2. God hath sweetned our Lives with Various Mercies. The city of *Syracuse* in *Sicily* was so curiously scituated, that the Sun was never out of sight: God hath so placed us by his Providence, that the Sun-shine of Mercy is never out of sight. We are Bemiracled with Mercy; Mercy feeds us with the *Finest of the wheat*, the Bread of Life; Mercy guards us with a Guard of Angels; it makes the *Rock* pour forth *Rivers of Oyl*: and shall not the Stream lead us to the Fountain? shall not we think of the God of our Mercies? this were high Ingratitude.

4. To have frequent and Devout Thoughts of God witnesseth Sincerity. No truer Touchstone of Sanctity, than the Spirituality of the Thoughts: that a man is, that his Thoughts are, *Prov.* 23. 7. *For as he thinketh in his Heart so is he.* Thoughts are freer from Hypocrisie than words: one may speak well for applause, or to stand right in the Opinion of others; but when we are alone and *think of Gods Name*, and admire his Excellencies, this shews the Heart to be Right. Thoughts are freer from

from
Life
riag
Rev
may
broo
Tho
God
than
ans,
whe
quer
Hea
ven,
dise
yet
good
of r
of th
5
Cur
thin
high
of t
pani
are
tion
thin
ever

from Hypocrisie than an Unblamable Life. A man may in his outward carriage be fair, yet have a Covetous, Revengeful mind. The Acts of Sin may be forborn, when the Heart sits brooding upon Sin; but to have the Thoughts Spiritualized and set upon God, is a truer Symptom of sincerity, than a Life free from Vice. Christians, what do your Thoughts run upon? where do they make their most frequent Visits? can you say, Lord, our Hearts are still Mounting up to Heaven, our Thoughts are lodg'd in Paradise; though we do not see thy face, yet we *think on thy Name*? this is a good Evidence of Sincerity. We Judge of men by their *Actions*; God Judgeth of them by their *Thoughts*.

5. Thinking much on God would Cure the Love of the World. Great things seem little to him that stands high. To such as stand upon the top of the *Alps* the great Cities of *Campania* seem little Villages: they who are Mounted High in the contemplation of Christ and Glory, how do the things of the World disappear, and even shrink into nothing! A Soul ele-

vated by faith above the Visible Orbs, hath the *Moon under his feet*. A true Saint intermedles with Secular Affairs more out of *Necessity* than *Choice*. St. *Pauls* Thoughts were sublime, he lived in the Altitudes, and how did he scorn the World*! Gal. 6. 14. *The world*

* *Quæ cū
aspecta pla-
cent, inspe-
cta displi-
cent, Se-
neca.*

is crucified to me *.

6. Thinking on God would be expulsive of Sin. Whence is Impiety but from Incogitancy? Did men Ruminare upon Gods Holiness and Justice, durst they sin at that rate as they do? That which check'd *Joseph*, was the Thoughts of a Sin-revenging God. When the delights of sin Tickle, let the Thoughts of God come into mens Minds, that he is both the *Spectatour* and the *Judge*, and after the *Golden Crowns* and *Womens Hair* come the *Lions Teeth*, Rev. 9. 8. This would put them into a cold Sweat, and be as the Angels *drawn Sword**, it would scare them from sin.

† Num. 22.
31.

7. Thinking on God is an admirable means to encrease our love to God. As it was with *Dauids* musing on Mortality, *Psam* 39. 3. *As I was Musing the fire burned*; so it is with our Musing

sing on the Deity : while we are thinking on God, our Hearts will kindle in love to him. The Reason our Affections are so chill and cold in Religion is, because we do not warm them with the Thoughts of God. Hold a Burning-glass to the Sun, and the glass burns that which is near to it : So when our Thoughts are lifted up to Christ the Sun of Righteousness, our Affections are set on fire. No sooner had the Spouse been thinking on her Saviours Beauty, but she fell *sick of love*, Cant. 5. 8. O ye Saints, do but let your Cogitations dwell upon the Love of Christ, who did pass by Angels and think of you ; who was wounded, that out of his wounds the *Balm of Gilead* might come to heal you ; who leaped into the Sea of his Fathers wrath, to save you from drowning : think of this unparallel'd love which sets the Angels a Wondring, and see if it will not affect your Hearts and cause Tears of love to flow forth.

8. Thinking on God will by degrees transform us into his Image. As *Jacobs* Flock looking on the Rods that had *White streaks* conceived and brought forth

like them, Gen. 30. 39. So by contemplating Gods Holiness, we are in some measure changed into his likeness. *2 Cor. 3. 18. Beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same Image.* The contemplative sight of God was *transforming*: they had some Print of Gods Holiness upon them; as *Moses* when he had been on the Mount with God, his face shined, *Exod. 34. 35.* What is Godliness but God-likeness? and who are so like him as they that think on his Name?

9. Thinking on God is sweet. it Ullers in a secret delight into the Soul *Psaln 104. 34. My meditation of him shall be sweet.* He whose Head is got above the Clouds, his Thoughts are fled aloft, and he hath God in his eye, is full of divine Raptures, and cries out as *Peter* in the transfiguration, *Lord, it is good to be here.* Holy Thoughts are the Dove we send out of the Ark of our Souls, and they bring an Olive branch of Peace. Some complain they have no Joy of their lives; and truly no wonder, when they are such strangers to Heavenly Contemplation

templation. Would you have God give you Comfort, and never think of him? Indeed *Israel* had Manna drop'd into their Tents, and they never Thought of it; but God will not drop down this Manna of Heavenly Joy on that Soul which seldom or never thinks of him. Would you have your Spirits chearful? let your Thoughts be celestial. The higher the Lark flies, the Sweeter it sings: The higher a Soul ascends in the Thoughts of God, the sweeter Joy it hath.

10. Thoughts of God will turn to the best account. Thoughts spent on the World are often in Vain. Some spend Thoughts about laying up a Portion for such a Child; and perhaps, either it dies, or lives to be a Cross. Others beat their Brains how to rise at Court; and when Royal Favour hath shined upon them, on a sudden an Eclipse falls out, and the Kings smile is turn'd into a frown; and then their Thoughts are frustrated—*Et stultus labor est ineptiarum*—*. How * *Martial.* oft do men build Castles in the Air? But the Thoughts of God will turn to a good account, they Augment

ment Sanctification, and bring Satisfaction, *Psalms 63. 5. My Soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, when I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee, &c.* The Thoughts we have of God in the time of health, will be a Comfort to us in the time of sickness.

11. God thinks of us, and shall not we think of him? *Psalms 40. 17. The Lord thinketh upon me.* God thinks on us every Morning, *Lam. 3. 23. His Mercies are new every Morning.* He gives us Night-Mercies, he Rocks us every Night asleep, *Psalms 127. 2. So he giveth his beloved Sleep:* and if we chance to wake he gives us Songs in the Night, *Job 35. 10. If God be thinking of us Day and Night, shall not we think of his Name?* How can we forget a friend who is ever mindful of us? *Jer. 29. 11. I know the Thoughts that I think towards you (saith the Lord) Thoughts of Peace.* Though God be out of our sight, we are not out of his Thoughts.

12. God will one Day reckon with us for our Thoughts. He will say I gave you a Cogitative faculty, what have you

you done with it? If God asks a Covetous man, what have been your Sentiments? which way have your Thoughts run? he will Answer, to heap up Riches: if God asks Princes and Emperors, how have you employ'd your Thoughts? they will say, how by our Scepter to beat down the Power of Godliness. What a dreadful account will these Persons have to give at last! Not only mens *Actions*, but their *Thoughts* will accuse them, *Rom.* 2. 15.

13. Our Thoughts of God shall not be lost. God accepts of the Thought for the deed. *David* had a good Thought come into his Mind to build God an House, and God took it as kindly as if he had done it, 2 *Chron.* 6. 8. *Forasmuch as it was in thy Heart to build an house to my Name, thou didst well that it was in thy Heart.* When Christians have Thoughts of promoting God's Glory, they would do such good Acts if it were in their Power, build Hospitals, distribute Justice, cut off offenders from the *City of God*, the Lord looks upon it as if they had done it: so that our Thoughts of God are not lost. Let

Let us think of God in a Right manner. A Good Medicine may be spoiled in the making: so may a Good Duty be spoiled in the doing. Thoughts may be Good for the matter of them, yet may be Faulty in the manner. I shall shew you

1. How Thoughts of God may fail in the Manner.
2. The Right Manner of Thinking upon God.

1. How Thoughts of God may fail in the Manner. 1. A man may Think of God, yet not intend his glory. *Jehu* had good Thoughts came into his Mind, to destroy the Baal-worshippers, but his intent was to advance himself into the Throne. Bad aims Fly-blow good Actions. 2. A man may have Good Thoughts but they are forced,—*Virtus nolentium nulla est*—When one bleeds under Gods afflicting hand, he may Think of God, yet have no love to him, *Psalms 78. 34. When he slew them, then they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer: nevertheless they did flatter*

ter

ter him with their Mouth. These were good Thoughts, but it was to complement with God, and to get rid of the Affliction. 3. A man may have Thoughts of God out of design to stop the Mouth of Conscience. Conscience doth lash the profane Sinner; what art thou so Wicked as never to Think of God, who indulgeth thee with so many favours? Hereupon he may have a few good Thoughts; but they are irksome to him: this is not from a Principle of Conscience, but to quiet Conscience. 4. A man may think of God with Horrour: he thinks of Gods Sovereignty, and dreads the Thoughts of God. You see one may think of God, yet these Thoughts may become sinful.

2. I shall shew you the Right manner of Thinking upon God: 1. Our Thoughts of God must be Serious. Feathers swim on the top, but Gold sinks into the Water: Feathery Spirits have some floating Thoughts; but good Hearts sink deep in the Thoughts of a Deity. 2. Our Thoughts of God must be Spiritual. Take heed of framing any gross conceits of God in
our

our Minds, representing him by the similitude of the Creature, *Deut.* 4. 15. *Te. saw no Similitude.* Conceive of God in Christ: we cannot see him any other way, as we cannot see the Sun in the Circle but in the Beams, the God-head dwells in Christs Humane nature, *Col.* 2. 9. Think of God as a Spirit full of immense Glory, propitious to us through a Mediatour. 3. Our Thoughts of God must be Delightful. With what Delight doth a Child think of his Father! A gracious Soul counts them the Sweetest hours which are spent with God. 4. Our Thoughts of God must be Vertual and Efficacious, leaving our Hearts in a a better Tune: The Thoughts of Gods faithfulness must make us confide in him, the Thoughts of Gods Holiness must make us conform to him. This is the Right thinking on God when it is influential, it leaves us in a more Heavenly frame.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Helps to Holy Thoughts.

IT shews us how to have our 3 Use.
Thoughts frequently fixed upon
God. 1. Begin the day with Holy Direction.
Thoughts*, *Psalms* 139. 17. *When I* * *Πρώτων*
awake I am still with thee. God should *πρὸς θεῶν*
have the first buddings of our Thoughts. *ἐπιμάχεται* Aristot.
In the Law, the Lord would have the
first fruits offered him : give God your
Virgin-thoughts in the Morning—*Quo*
semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
testa diu—what the Vessel is first
seasoned with, it keeps the relish a
long time after. The Mind being sea-
soned with Good Thoughts in the
Morning, will keep the Heart in a
better Decorum all the day after.

2. If you would think of God take
heed of hindrances. 1. Turn away
your eyes from beholding *Vanity*,
Psal. 119. 37. Vain Objects Poyson
the Imagination, lascivious Pictures,
and wanton talk leave bad impressi-
ons

ons upon the fancy. 2. Call off your Thoughts what you can from the world. If worldly Thoughts come Crowding into our Mind, good Thoughts will be lost in the Crowd.

3. Get a love to God and his ways. One cannot but think of that which he loves, *Jer. 2. 32. Can a Maid forget her Ornaments?* when she hath not her Jewel on her Ear, she will have it in her Thoughts. A person deeply in love cannot keep his Thoughts off from the Object he loves. The reason we Think on God no more, is, because we love him no more. Let there be but one spark of love to God, it will fly Upward in Heavenly Ejaculations. By nature we have Quick-silver Hearts which cannot be made to fix on God, but by love.

4. If you would think often on God, get an interest in him, *Psalms 48. 14. This God is our God.* We think most upon that which is our own. If a man ride by brave Houses and Gardens, he casts his Eye slightly upon them, and doth not much Mind them; but let him have an house of his own, and his Thoughts dwell in it. Why do men

men
cau
a r
and
The

She
S

2.

Lor

T
spea
he
then
but
pres

1.
gave

men think no more of God, but because God and they are strangers. Let a mans interest in God be cleared, and he will not be able to keep his Thoughts off from God,

CHAP. XII.

Shewing the first Good Effect of the Saints Piety.

2. **T**HE Good effects of the Saints Piety. 1. God *Regarded it. The Lord hearkened and heard.*

These blessed ones in the Text were speaking and thinking of God, and he did not turn away his Ear from them, as if he had not minded them; but he *hearkened and heard*; which expression denotes.

1. Diligence.

2. Delight.

1. It notes the diligent heed God gave to these Saints, *He hearkened.*

K

Here

Here was attention of Ear, and intenseness of Mind. Harkening is the Gesture of one that Listens to what another saith.

2. Gods hearkening shews the delight he took in the Holy Dialogues of these Saints: he was pleased with them, they were to him as sweet Melody.

Doct. That God takes special Notice of the Good which he sees in his People. The Children of God may perhaps think that God doth not regard them, *Job 30. 20. I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me.* The Church complains, *God did shut out her Prayer,* Lam. 3. 8. But though God be sometimes *Silent*, he is not *Deaf*: he takes Notice of all the good Services of his People, *the Lord hearkened and heard.*

Quest. Whence is it God takes such Notice of his Peoples Services?

Answ. 1. Not from any Merit in them, but the Impulsive cause is his *indulgentia* or Free-grace. The best duties of the Righteous could not endure Gods balance*, but God will display the Trophies of his Mercy. Free-grace accepts what Justice might condemn.

* *Horreo
quicquid de
meo est.
Bern.*

2. Gods taking Notice of the good
in

in his people, is through Christ, Eph.
 1. 6. *He hath made us accepted* in
 the Beloved.* Or as Chrysostom renders* *ἐξαιτίας*
 it, he hath made us *Favourites*. Through
 the Red glass every thing appears of
 a Red Colour: through Christs blood,
 both our Persons and Dutyes appear
 Ruddy and Beautiful in Gods Eyes.

3. God takes Notice of the Servi-
 ces of his People, because they flow from
 a Principle of Grace. God regards the
 Voice of Faith, Cant. 2. 14. *O my
 Dove, let me hear thy Voice, for sweet
 is thy Voice.* The Services of the Wic-
 ked are harsh and sowre, but the
 Godly give God the *first ripe Cluster** * Micah 7.
 Which grows from the sweet and i.
 pleasant Root of Grace.

CHAP. XIII.

Inferences drawn from the Proposition.

¹ Use.
Inform.
¹ Branch.

* τὰ μὴ
συμβαδόντα
προσβαίν.
Chrys.

IF God hearkens and hears, hence I infer Gods Omniscieny. How could, he being in Heaven, hear what the Saints speak and think, were he not Omniscient? Through the bright Mirror of his own essence he hath a full Idea of all things. He knows the Intrigues of *States*, the Stratagems of his Enemies, *Exod.* 14. 24. Future Contingencies fall within his Cognizance*. Gods Knowledge is Primary: he is the Original, Pattern, and Prototype of all Knowledge. Gods Knowledge is *Instantaneous*. He knows all *at once*: Our Knowledge is *Successive*, we know one thing after another, and argue from the Effect to the cause; but all things are in Gods view *uno intuitu*, in one intire prospect. Gods Knowledge is *infallible* and not Subject

Subject to mistake. Such is the Infinity of his Knowledge, that the Apostle cries out in Admiration *Ω βαδΩ*, *O the depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!* Rom. 11. 33. The World is to God as a Bee-hive of Glass, where you see the working of the Bees, and the framing of their Combs. All things are unvail-
ed to the Eye of Jehovah.

See Gods Goodness who often passeth ^{2 Branch.} by the failings of his People*, and ^{* Numb.} takes Notice of the good in them, ^{23. 21.} *He hearkened and heard.* 1 Pet. 3. 6. *Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* The Holy Ghost passeth by her unbelief and Laughing at the Promise, and took Notice of her reverence to her Husband, *she called him Lord.* Jam. 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the Patience of Job.* We have heard of his Impatience, cursing his Birth-day: But the Lord doth not upbraid him with that, but observes the good that was in him; *ye have heard of the Patience of Job.* The Painter who drew *Alexanders* Picture, Drew him with his finger upon his Scar; so God puts a finger of Mercy upon the Scars of his Children. He sees their Faith,

and Winks at their failing.

3 Branch.

See Gods different carriage towards the Godly and the Wicked: If the Godly Think of his Name, *he hearkens and hears*; but if the Wicked meddle with Religious duties, he turns away his Ear, *Gen. 4. 5. To Cain and his Offering God had no respect.* Suppose a man had a Sweet breath, yet if he had the Plague, no body would come near him: So, though a sinner may give God many a sweet elegant Expression in Prayer, yet having *the Plague of the Heart*, God will not receive any Offering from him. If God shut mens Prayers out of Heaven, it is a sad Prognostick that he will shut their Persons out of Heaven.

4 Branch.

See the Priviledge of the Godly: they have Gods Ear, the Lord *hearkened and heard*, *Psalms 34. 15. His Ears are open to their cry*: It would be counted a great happiness to have the *Kings ear*; but what is it to have Gods Ear! *The Lord hearkened and heard.* Believers have the Spirit of God breathing in them, and God cannot but hear the Voice of his own Spirit.

See

See what an encouragement here ⁵ Branch is to be conversant in the duties of Gods Worship: he takes Notice of the services of his People; he hearkens to them as to sweet Musick. Who would not come with their *humble addresses* to God, when he is so pleased with them? *Prov. 15. 8.*

But my deserts are nothing?

Object 1.

God bestows not his Favours according to our desert, but according to his Promise. *Answe.*

But I have prayed a long time and have no Answer. *Object 2.*

God may hear Prayer when he doth not Answer. He may lend us his Ear, when he doth not shew us his Face. The Text saith, the Lord *hearkened and heard.* 'Tis not said he gave an Answer, but he *hearkened.* It becomes suitors to wait. Faith stays upon God, Patience stayes for God, *Psal. 123. 2. As the Eyes of Servants look unto the hand of their Masters, so our Eyes wait upon the Lord our God, untill he have Mercy upon us.* *Answe.*

See the difference between God and men: God takes Notice of the good in his people; the Wicked pass by the

good in the Godly, and take Notice only of their failings. If they can spy any indecency or blemish in them, they upbraid them with it; Like those children, *2 King 2. 23.* who reproached *Elisba* for his Baldness, but took no Notice of the Prophets Miracles. *Erasmus* speaks of one, who observed all the lame Verses in *Homer*, but passed over the good.

7 Branch.

From this, the Lord *hearkened and heard*, Behold the folly of Idolaters: they worship a God who can neither hearken nor hear. The *Cretians* Pictured *Jupiter* without Ears. Idol-Gods have Ears, but *hear not*, Psalm 115. 16. A life-less God is good enough for a life-less worship.

2 Use.

Exhortation.

1 Branch.

Let the People of God stand and Wonder. 1. At Gods *Condescension*, that he who is so high in the praises and acclamations of the Angels, should stoop so low, as to listen to the lisps of his children. *The Lord hearkened and heard*: Alas, God hath no need of our Services; he is infinitely blessed in reflecting upon the Splendour of his own infinite Being: we cannot adde the least Cubit to his Essential Glory, *Job 35. 7. If thou be Righte-*

Righteous what givest thou to him? or what receiveth he at thy hands? yet such is his sweet Condescention, that he doth as it were stoop below himself, and take Notice of his Peoples Poor Oblations.

2. Wonder at Gods Love, that he should regard those services of his People, which are so mixed with Corruption, *Isa. 64. 6. Our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags**. The Eucharistical Sacrifice, which was the highest, had some *Leaven* joined with it, *Levit. 7. 13.* Our best duties have some Leaven of Imperfection in them; yet such is Gods love, that he hath a liking to them, and accepts them, *Cant. 5. 1. I have eaten my Hony-Comb with my Hony.* Hony is sweet, but the Hony-comb is Viscous and bitter, and can hardly be eaten; yet such was Christs love to his Spouse, that he eat of her *Hony-comb*, her services mixed with Imperfection, and was pleased to take delight in them. Oh the Love of God! that he should have respect to our offerings that are interlarded with sin. Our best duties are as sweet Wine coming out of a Sowre Cask.

* *Splendida peccata.*
Aug.

It

2 Branch.

If God hearkens to us when we speak, let us hearken to him when he speaks. In the word preached God speaks to us. He is said *now* to speak to us from Heaven, *Heb. 12. 25.* That is, by the preaching of the word, as a King speaks by his Ambassadour. Doth God hearken to us, and shall not we hearken to him? Be not like the *Deaf-adder* which stoppeth her Ear. This the Lord complains of, *Job 33. 14.* God *speaketh Once, yea Twice; yet man regardeth it not.* If Gods word doth not prevail with us, our prayers will not prevail with him.

CHAP. XIV.

Shewing the second Good Effect of the Saints Piety,

2. **T**HE Second Good effect of the Saints Piety, was, God recorded it. *A Book of Remembrance was written before him:* The word in the
 Origin-

Origin-
 Signe
 nume
 going
 ing;
 God
 Holy
 Child
 slip
 word
 was
 did
 of th
 Wro
 bran
 and p
 Not
 cord
 dow
 Men
 Thin
 as f
 but
 sand
 day
 men
 spec
 thei
 Men

Original for Book of Remembrance * ^{סֵפֶר זִכְרוֹן}

Signifies a Book of Memorials or Monuments. The words immediately foregoing recite Gods *hearkening* and *hearing*; but lest any should say, though God doth at the present hear the Holy Speeches and Thoughts of his Children, yet may they not in time slip out of his Mind? therefore these words are added, a *Book of Remembrance* was written before him. The Lord did not only hear the Good speeches of the Saints, but Recorded them, and Wrote them down; a *Book of Remembrance* was written. This is spoken *and so it was after the manner of men.*

Not that God hath any book of Records by him, he needs not write down any thing for the help of his Memory, he is not Subject to oblivion. Things done a thousand years ago are as fresh to him, as if they were done but Yesterday, *Psalms 90. 4. A thousand years in thy sight are but as Yesterday when it is past.* This book of Remembrance therefore, is a *borrowed* speech, taken from Kings, who have their Chronicles wherein they note Memorable things*. King *Ahasuerus*

had
* *Metaphora a regibus sumpta qui habent annales in quibus memoranda annotant.*
Grotius.

had his book of Records, wherein were written the worthy deeds of *Mordecai*, *Efther* 6. 1, 2. So God bears in Mind all the Good speeches and pious actions of his Children. Gods curious and Critical observation is a *Book of Records*, where nothing can be lost or torn out.

Dott.

God doth Eternally remember all the Good designs, and Pious endeavours of his People, *Heb.* 6. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your Work and labour of love, which you have shewed towards his Name.* Eight things God writes down in his Book of Remembrance.

1. The Lord writes down the Names of his Saints, *Philip.* 4. 3. *Whose Names are in the Book of Life.* This Book hath no *Errata's*, *Rev.* 3. 5.

2. The Lord writes down the good speeches of his People. When Christians speak together of the Mysteries of Heaven (which is like Musick in comfort) God is much taken with it: When their Tongues are going, Gods pen is going in Heaven. They that fear'd the Lord spake often one to another,
and

and
ten.

3.
of hi
Earth
hath

56.
tle,

drop
the

and
besid

mem

are
God

shew
9. 2

writ
wri

ers,
head

min
ver

his

Wa
Th

to
fur

and a Book of Remembrance was written.

3. The Lord writes down the *Tears* of his People. Tears drop down to the Earth, but they reach Heaven*: God hath his *Bottle* and his *Book*, Psalm 56. 8. *Put thou my Tears into thy bottle, are they not in thy Book?* Tears drop from the Saints, as Water from the *Roses*: they are fragrant to God, and he puts them in his *Bottle*. And besides this, he hath his *Book of Remembrance*, where he sets them down; *are they not in thy Book?* Especially God writes down such Tears as are shed for the sins of the times, Ezek. 9. 2. *One was clothed with linnen; with a writers Inkhorn by his side: this was to write down the Tears of the Mourners, and to set a mark upon the foreheads of them that sighed for the Abominations done in the midst of the City,* ver. 4.

* *Deorsum cadunt, sursum volant.*

4. God writes down the *Thoughts* of his People. We can write down mens *Words*, but we cannot write down their *Thoughts*. It would pose the Angels to write mens *Thoughts*: but be assured, never an Holy cogitation comes into

into our Mind, but God writes it down. So in the Text, a *Book* of Remembrance was written for them that *Thought upon his Name*. Two things are silent, yet have a Voice, *Tears* *, and *Thoughts* †.

*Psal. 6. 8.
† Isa. 66.
18.

5. God writes down the *desires* of his People, *Psalms*. 38 9. *All my desire is before thee*: That is, it is set down in thy book. Desire is the Spiritual Appetite, or the Souls Anhelation and breathing after God, *Psalms* 84. 2. In this Life we do rather *desire* God than *enjoy* him. Can we say we take our Souls è *Corporis Pharetra* out of the quiver of our Bodies, and shoot them into Heaven? do our Affections fall forth towards Christ? do we desire him superlatively and uncessantly? Every such desire is put down in Gods Register Book: *all my desire is before thee*.

6. The Lord writes down the *prayers* of his People, *Jonah* 2. 7. Prayer, though it be not *Vocal*, only *Mental*, is Recorded, 1 *Sam.* 1. 13. *Hannah spake in her Heart*. That prayer God did write down and Answer; God was better to her than her prayer; she

she prayed for a Son, and God. gave her a Prophet. When the heart is so full of grief, that it can only groan in Prayer; yet a Groan is sometimes the best part of a Prayer, and God writes it down, *Psalms 38. 9. Lord, my Groaning is not hid from thee.* If we cannot speak with elegancy in Prayer, if it be only lisping and chattering, God puts it in his Book of Remembrance, *Isa. 38. 14. Like a Crane, so did I chatter*: yet that prayer was heard and registred, *Ver. 5. I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy Tears.*

7. God writes down the *Alms* of his People. Works of Mercy must be done out of *Love* to God: as *Mary* out of love brought her Ointments and sweet Spices and anointed Christs dead body: so out of pure love we must bring our Ointments of Charity to anoint the Saints, which are Christs living body, Such Alms are not lost *. *Heb. 13. 16. With such Sacrifices God is well pleased.* And that we may see how well the Lord is pleased with them, he hath a Book of Remembrance for them, he writes them down. *Item, so much sent to the Lord, Acts 10. 4.*

Corne-

*Opera eleemosynaria non pereunt sed parturiunt.

Cornelius, thine Alms are come up for a memorial before God.

8. God hath a Book of Remembrance for the *Sufferings* of his People. The Saints Purgatory is in this life. But there are two things may bear up their Spirits. 1. Every Groan of theirs goes to Gods Heart, *Exod. 6. 7. I have heard the Groanings of the Children of Israel.* In Musick when one string is touch'd, all the rest sound: when the Saints are stricken Gods bowels sound. 2. God hath a Book of Records to write down his Peoples injuries. The wicked make wounds in the backs of the Righteous, ~~and~~ then pour in Vinegar: God writes down their Cruelty. *1 Sam. 15. 2. I Remember what Amalek did to Israel. Amalek was Esaus Grand-child**. A bitter enemy of *Israel*. The *Amalekites* shewed their Spight to *Israel* two ways. 1. They did lye in ambush; and as *Israel* passed by, fell upon their rear, and cut off the feeble in their army, *1 Sam. 15. 2.*

Gen. 35.
21.

2. They did openly give Battel to them, and would have hindred them from going into *Canaan*, *Exod. 17. 8.*
Now

Now God took Notice of *Israels* sufferings by *Amalek*. I Remember that *Amalek* did to *Israel*, I have my Book of Remembrance, I write it down, Ver. 3. Go and smite *Amalek*.

CHAP. XV.

Several Corollaries flowing from the Proposition.

IT shews us that it is not in Vain ^{1 Use.} to serve God. The Wicked who ^{Inform.} know not God, think him an ^{1 Branch.} hard-master, and say as they, *Job* 21. 15. *What profit should we have if we pray to him?* But the Text shews us that God records all the Services of his People, a Book of Remembrance was written before him. Gods writing in a Book is, 1. An honour to the Saints: the *Romans* wrote the names of their Senators in a Book, and in token of Honour they were called *Patres conscripti*: so Gods Book of Remembrance shews his high esteem of his People and their services, he writes
L them

them down. 2. Gods writing in a Book denotes the special favour God bears to his People; he Registers them and their services with an intent to Crown them. *Tamerlain* wrote down all the Memorable deeds of his Soldiers, whom he afterwards preferred to places of dignity. Gods service is most eligible; let us make *Josbua's Choice*, Josh. 24. 15. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* If we should desert Gods service, whither shall we go? when Christ asked his Disciples *will ye also go away?* saith Peter, *Lord to whom shall we go?* John 6. 68. As if he had said, if we leave thee, we do not know where to mend our selves. Let us adhere to God, he hath his Book of Memorials to record our Allegiance. We may be losers for him, we shall not be losers by him.

2 Branch.

See from hence that as God doth Register the good works of his People, so he hath a *Book of Remembrance* to write down the sins of the wicked, *Isa.* 30. 8. *Go, write it before them in a Table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come, for ever, that this is a Rebelious People,*
that

that will not bear the Law of the Lord. Mens sins are written in the book of Conscience, and the Book of Gods Omnisiciency. They think because God doth not speak to them by his loud Judgements, therefore God doth not know their sins; but though God doth not speak, he writes, Jer. 17. 1. *The sin of Judah is written with a Pen of Iron and the Point of a Diamond.* God scores down every act of Oppression, Bribery, Uncleanness, Hos. 7. 2. *They consider not in their Heart, that I remember all their wickedness.* King Belshazzar was carousing and drinking wine in bowls, and praising his Gods of Gold and Silver; but while he was sinning, God was writing, Dan. 5. 6. *In the same hour came forth fingers of a mans hand, and wrote upon the Plaister of the Wall of the Kings Palace, and the King saw part of the hand that wrote: then the Kings countenance was changed.* We read of Gods Book, Rev. 20. 12. *The books were opened:* and his Bag, Job 14. 17. *My transgression is sealed up in a bag.* It seems to allude to Law-Courts where there are Indictments against such Malefactours

L 2 seal-

sealed up in a Bag, and are produced at the assizes. When God shall open his *black book* wherein mens Names are written, and his *bag* wherein their sins are written: then their Hearts will tremble, and their *knees smite one against another*. Every Lye a sinner tells, every Oath he Swears, every drunken bout, God writes it down in his book of Remembrance; and woe to him if the book be not crossed with the Blood of Christ.

3. See the Mercifulness of God to his Children, who blots their sins out of his book of Remembrance, and writes their good deeds in his book of Remembrance, *Isa. 43. 25. I, even I am he that blot-teth out thy Transgressions*: 'tis a Metaphor borrow'd from a Creditor, who takes his pen and blots out the debt owing him; so saith God, I will blot out thy Transgressions. Or as the Hebrew * *מחה* carries it, *I am blotting them out* *.

God in forgiving sin passeth an act of Oblivion, Jer. 31. 34. *I will remember your sins no more*. God will not upbraid his People with their former offences. We never read after *Peter* repented, that Christ upbraided him with his de-

nial

nial of him. O the Heavenly indulgence and kindness of God to his People! he remembers every thing but their sins. He writes down their good Thoughts and speeches in a Merciful book of Remembrance; but their sins are as if they had never been, they are carried into the Land of Oblivion.

If God records our services, then ^{2 Use.} let us record his Mercies, let us have ^{Exhortation.} our Book of Remembrance. A Christian should keep two books alwayes by him; one to write his sins in, that he may be humble; the other to write his Mercies in; that he may be thankful. *David had his book of Remembrance, 1 Chron. 16. 4. He appointed certain of the Levites to record, and thank, and praise the Lord God of Israel.* We should keep a Register-book of Gods Mercies, though I think it is hard to get a book big enough to hold them. At such a time we were in straits, and God supplied us; at such a time under sadness of Spirit, and God dropped in the Oyl of gladness, at such a time near death, and God Miraculously restored us. If God be mindful of what we do for him, shall not we be mindful of

what he doth for us? Gods mercies, like Jewels, are too good to be lost: get
a Book of Remembrance.

³ Use.
 Comfort.

It is Comfort to the Godly. 1. In case of friends forgetting them. *Joseph did Pharaoh's Butler a kindness, yet did not the chief Butler remember Joseph; but forgot him. Gen. 40. 23.* 'Tis too usual to remember *Injuries*, and forget *Friends*; but God hath a Book of Remembrance, where he writes down all his old friends. Near Relations may sometimes be forgetful: the tender Mother may forget her infant, *Isa. 49. 15. Can a Woman forget her sucking child? yea she may, but I will not forget thee:* a Mother may sooner be unnatural than God forgetful. Christ our High-priest hath the Names of the Saints written upon his *Breast-plate*, and all their good deeds written in his *Book of Memorials*. Let this be as *Bezar stone* to revive the Hearts of Gods people; though friends may blot you out of their Mind, yet God will not blot you out of his Book.

2. This is a consolation to the Godly, the Lord keeps a Book of Remembrance for this end, that he may at
 the

the last day make a publick and solemn mention of all the good which his Saints have done. God will open his Book of Records, and say as, *Mat. 25. 35. I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink, &c.* God will make known all the memorable and pious actions of his People before men and Angels: he will say, here are they who have prayed, and wept for Sin; here are they who have been Advocates for my Truth; here are they who have laid to Heart my dishonours, and have mourned for what they could not reform. These are my renowned ones, my *Hephzibahs* in whom my Soul delights. What a Glorious thing will this be, to have God divulge the Encomium of his Saints! when *Alexander* saw the Sepulcher of *Achilles*, he cryed out O happy *Achilles* who hadst *Homer* to set forth thy praise! what an honour will it be to have the Names and worthy deeds of the Saints mentioned, and God himself to be the Herauld to proclaim their praises! *2Cor.4.5

CHAP. XVI.

Shewing the Third Good Effect of the Saints Piety.

3. **T**HE third Good effect of the Saints Piety, was, God rewarded it, *vers. 17. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my Jewels.* The reward is threefold. 1. Gods owning them; *they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts:* where observe.

1. The Person speaking, *the Lord of Hosts.*

2. The Reward it self, *they shall be mine.*

1. The Person speaking, *the Lord of Hosts.* This is too great a word to be passed by in silence. God is often in Scripture stiled, *Dominus exercituum,* the Lord of Hosts, *Psalms 46. 11. Isa. 1. 24.* That is, he is the Supreme General, and Commander of all Armies and forces, and gives Victory to whom he will.

Why

Why is this Name, *The Lord of Hosts* given to God? 1 Quest.

Not that God needs any Hosts, to protect himself, or Suppress his enemies. Earthly Princes have Armies to defend their Persons from danger, but God needs none to help him: he can fight without an army. God puts strength into all Armies; other Captains may give their Soldiers *Armour*, but they cannot give them *Strength*: but God doth, . *Psalms* 18. 39. *Thou hast Girded me with strength unto battel.* Why then is God said to have Hosts and Armies if he needs them not. Answ.

1. It is to set forth his Sovereign Power, and Grandure: all Armies and Regiments are under his command. Answ.

2. It is to shew us that though God can effect all things by himself; yet in his Wisdom he oft useth the Agency of the Creature to bring to pass his will and purpose. 2 Quest.

What are these Hosts or Armies of which God is the Sovereign Lord? 1 Quest.

1. God hath an Army in Heaven, Angels and Arch-angels, *1 King* 22. 19. *I saw the Lord sitting on his Throne, and all the Host of Heaven stand-* Answ.

standing by him. By the Host of Heaven is meant the Angels; they being Spirits are a Puissant Army, *Psalm 103. 20. Te Angels which excell in Strength.* We read of one Angel who destroy'd in one Night *an hundred fourscore and five thousand,* 2 King 19. 35. If one Angel destroy'd such a vast Army, what can a Legion of Angels do? a Legion consisted of six thousand six hundred sixty six, saith *Hesychius:* how many of these Legions go to make up the Heavenly Host! *

*Dan. 7. 10

2: The Stars are Gods Army, *Dent. 4. 19.* These were set in *Battalia* and fought against Gods enemies, *Judg. 5. 20. The Stars in their courses fought against Sisera.* That is, the Stars did charge like an Army, raising Storms and tempests by their influences, and so destroying the whole Army of *Sisera.* 2. God hath Armies upon earth.

1. Rational.
2. Irrational.

1. *Rational,* Hosts of men: these are under Gods command and conduct,

duct, they stir not without his War-
rant: the Lord hath the managing of
all Martial affairs: not a stroke is
struck, but God orders it: not a Bul-
let flies but God directs it.

2. *Irrational*, God can raise an Ar-
my of *Flies*, as he did against King
Pharaoh, Exod. 8. 24. An Army of
Worms, as he did against King *Herod*,
Acts 12. 23. O what a Lord is here
who hath so many Hosts under his
Pay and conduct!

Let us Dread this Lord of Hosts: ^{3 Use.}
we fear men who are in Power, and ^{Exhortati-}
is not that God to be adored and feared ^{on.}
who acts *pro arbitrio*. He doth what he ^{1 Branch.}
pleaseth in the Armies of Heaven and earth,
Dan. 9. 35. His Power is as large
as his will, Job 23 13. *What his*
Soul desireth, even that he doth. The
Ephori had Power over the King of
Sparta; the *Tribunes* over the Roman
consuls; much more hath God a Sove-
rain Power over all. He *poureth con-*
tempt upon Princes, Job 12. 21. He
threw the Proud Angels to Hell. God
can with a word unpin the Wheels
and break the Axle tree of the Crea-
tion. Gods Power is a *Glorious Pow-*
er,

er, *Col. 1. 11.* And herein it appears Glorious, it is never spent or wasted. Men while they exercise their strength, weaken it. But, *the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary*, *Isa. 40. 28.* Though God spends his *Arrows* upon his enemies, *Deut. 32. 23.* yet not his *strength*. O then tremble before this Lord of Hosts, Remember (O hard-hearted sinner!) how many wayes God can be revenged on thee. He can raise an Army of diseases against thee in thy body: he can set the humours of the body one against another, he can make the heat dry up the Moisture, or the Moisture drown the heat; he can Arm every Creature against thee, the Dog, the Boar, the Elephant. He can Arm Conscience against thee, as he did against *Spira* making him *a Terror to himself*: O dread this Lord of Hosts.

2 Branch.

— If God be the Lord of Hosts, let us take heed of hardning our Hearts against God. It was the saying of *Pompey* that with one stamp of his Foot he could raise all *Italy* up in Arms*. God can with a word raise

* *Plat.*

raise all the Militia of Heaven and Earth against us: and shall we dare affront him? *Job 9. 4. Who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?* Such as live in the open breach of Gods Commandments harden their Hearts against God; they raise a War against Heaven, *Job 15. 25. He strengtheneth himself against the Almighty* *. Like Warriors, who Muster up all the forces they can, to fight with their Antagonists: so the sinner harnesseth, and strengthens himself against *Jehovah*, *Ver. 26. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers.* Bucklers anciently had one great boss in the middle with a sharp pike in it to wound the adversary. The flagitious sinner encounters the God of Heaven, and runs upon the thick bosses of his fury, which will wound mortally. The Wicked do as *Caligula*, who challenged *Jupiter* to a duel: but who ever hardened himself against God and prospered? will men go to measure Arms with God? *Job 40. 9. Hast thou an Arm like God?* God is Almighty, therefore can hurt his enemies; and he is invisible

† *Induravit seputans se deum posse vincere, Mercer.*

*Qualis per
arva Leo
fulvam mi-
gnaci fronte
concutions
jubam, Ju-
ven.

visible, therefore they cannot hurt him. Who can fight with a Spirit? God will be too hard for his Enemies at the long run*, *Psalms* 68. 21. God shall wound the head of his Enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses. Julian hardened his Heart against God, but what got he at last? did he prosper? Being wounded in Battle he threw up his blood into the Air, and said to Christ, *Vicisti Galilae*: O Galilean thou hast overcome, I acknowledge thy Power whose Name and truth I have opposed. How easily can God chastise Rebels? *Exod.* 14. 24. In the morning-watch God looked to the host of the Egyptians through the Pillar of fire, and troubled their host. It needs cost God no more to destroy his Proudest adversaries, than a look, a cast of the Eye. 'Tis better to lye Prostrate at Gods feet, and meet him with tears in our Eyes, than Weapons in our hands: we overcome God, not by resistance, but by Repentance.

3 Branch.

If God be the Lord of Hosts, let us be so wise as to engage him on our side, *Psalms* 46 11. The Lord of Hosts

is with us. Great is the Priviledge to have the Lord of Hosts for us. 1. If the Lord of Hosts be on our side, he can discover the subtil plots of Enemies. Thus he detected the Counsel of *Achitophel*, 2 Sam. 17. 16. And did not the Lord discover the Popish conspirators both in the Powder-Treason (that *Catholick villany*) and of late, when they would have subverted Religion and Laws, and like *Italian Butchers* have turned *England* into an *Akeldama* or Field of blood? If it had not been the Lord who was *on our side*, now may *England* say, when men rose up against us, *they had swallowed us up quick.*

2. If the Lord of Hosts be on our side, he can bridle his Enemies, and lay such a restraint upon their Spirits, that they shall not do the mischief they intend, Gen. 31. 39. *It is in the Power of my hand to do you hurt (said Laban to Jacob) but the God of your fathers spake unto me saying, take heed thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. Laban had power to do hurt, but no heart. When Balak called upon Balaam to curse Israel, God so dispirited*

rited Balaam that he could not discharge his thunderbolt, *Num.* 23. 8. *How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?* He had a good mind to curse, but God held him back.

3. If the Lord of Hosts be for us, he can help us, though means fail, and things seem to be given for lost. When Gideons Army was small, and rendred despicable, then God Crowned them with Victory, *Judg.* 7. 2, 22. When the Arm of Flesh shrinks, now is a time for the Arm of Omnipotency to be put forth, *Deut.* 32. 36. *The Lord shall repent himself for his Servants when he sees their Power is gone, and there is none shut up or left.* The less of man is seen, the more of God.

4. If the Lord be on our side he can save us in that very way in which we think he will destroy us. Would not any have thought the Whales belly should have been Jonahs Grave? but God made the fish a ship, in which he sailed safe to shore. *Paul* got to Land by the breaking of the ship, *Acts.* 28. 44. God can make the adverse Party do his Work; he can cause

cause divisions among the Enemies,
and turn their own Weapons against
themselves*, *Isa. 19. 2. I will set the* * 2Chron.
Egyptians against the Egyptians. 20. 23.
Judg. 7.

5. If the Lord of Hosts be on our
side, he can make the Churches af-
fliction a means of her Augmentation,
Exod. 1. 12. The more they afflicted
them, the more they multiplied. The
Church of God is like that Plant Gre-
gory Nazianzen speaks of, which lives
by dying, and grows by cutting*. † דאָוּל
פֿאַרן טוּם
עוּלֶיךָ.
Persecution propagates the Church:
the scattering of the Apostles up and
down, was like scattering of seed, it
did tend much to the spreading of
the Gospel, *Acts 8. 1. 4.*

6. If the Lord of Hosts be on our
side, he can alter the scene and turn
the ballance of affairs when he plea-
seth, *Dan. 1. 21. He changeth times*
and seasons. God can remove Moun-
tains which lye in the way, or leap
over them. His Power is uncontrolla-
ble: he can bring Harmony out of
discord. He who brought Isaac out of
a dead Womb, and the *Messiah* out
of a Virgins Womb, what cannot he
do? The Lord of Hosts can in an in-

M

stant

stant alter the face of things. There are no Impossibles with God : if means fail he can Create. 'Tis therefore high prudence to get this Lord of Hosts on our side. *Rom. 8. 31. If God be for us, who can be against us?* And if we would engage God to be on our side,

1. Let us be earnest suitors to him, exercise Eyes of Faith, and Knees of prayer. *Jer. 14. 9.* And in prayer let us use *Josbua's* argument, *Josb. 7. 9. What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* Lord, if the cause of Religion lose ground, how will thy name suffer! Popish Enemies never prevail, but they Blaspheme.

2. Let us put away iniquity out of our Tabernacles, *Job 11. 14.* Sin is not worth keeping: who would keep a Plague-fore? Let us discard and abjure our sins*; And then the Lord of Hosts will be on our side, and as a Pledge of his favourable presence, he will entail the Gospel, that Crowning blessing, upon us and our posterity. So much for the Person speaking; *the Lord of Hosts.*

* *Jer. 7. 3.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

*The first Part of the Saints reward,
Gods owning them.*

2. **I** Come now to the reward it self, the first part whereof is Gods owning them, *they shall be mine.*

Expositors here vary: I take the sence of it to be, *they shall be mine in Covenant*, Ezek. 16. 8. *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine**. This is no small favour to *Isa. 43. 1. be in Covenant with God: therefore when God told *Abraham* that he would enter into Covenant with him, *Abraham fell on his face*; Gen. 17. 2. as being amazed that the great God should bestow such a signal favour upon him. God never entred into Covenant with the Angels when they fell, but he proclaims himself God in Covenant with Believers, *they shall be mine.* This Covenant enriched with Free-grace, is a better Covenant than that which was

M 2

made

made with *Adam* in Innocency. For

1. The least failing would have made the first Covenant null and void: but many failings do not invalidate the Covenant of Grace. I grant the least sin makes a *trespass* upon the Covenant; but doth not rescind it. Every failing in the Conjugal Relation breaks not the Marriage bond.

2. The first Covenant being violated, allowed the sinner no remedy; all doors of hope were shut: but the new Covenant allows of a Remedy: it provides a surety, *Heb. 12. 24. Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant.*

1 Use.
Inform.

See the amazing goodness of God to his People, to enter into Covenant with them, and say, *Ye are mine,* 2 Sam. 23. 5. *He hath made with me an Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure.* The first Covenant stood upon the ticklish Foundation of Works. *Adam* had no sooner a stock of Original Righteousness to Trade with, but he broke: but this Covenant of Grace is confirmed with Gods Decree, and rests upon two mighty Pillars, the Oath of God, and the Blood of God. That ye may see how great

a

a priviledge this is to be owned by the Lord federally, that he should be our God, and we his people, consider,

1. If we are in Covenant with God and he saith to us *Ye are mine*, then all that is in God is ours. A person falling to decay marrying to a King, hath an interest in all the Crown-revenues: God having entred into a near Relation with us, and saying *ye are mine*, we have a share in his Rich revenues. The Lord saith to every Believer as the King of *Israel* said to the King of *Syria*, 1 Kin. 20. 4. *I am thine and all that I have*: My Wisdom shall be thine to teach thee, my Holiness shall be thine to Sanctifie thee, my Mercy shall be thine to save thee. What richer dowry than Deity? God is a whole Ocean of blessedness. If there is enough in him to fill the Angels, then sure he hath enough to fill us.

2. If God saith to us *ye are mine*, then he will have a tender care of us.

1 Pet. 5. 7. *He careth for you* *. * *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.*
God to shew his tender anxiousness towards *Israel*, *bare them as upon Eagles* wings,

M 3

wings, Exod. 19. 4. The Eagle carries her young ones upon her wing to defend them; the Arrow must first shoot through the Old Eagle, before it can touch her Young ones. A Mothers care is seen in leading the Child that it may not fall: such is Gods care. *Hof.*

II. 3. *I taught Ephraim to go, leading them by their Arms.* We may argue a *minori ad majus*, if God take care of the meanest Insects and Animals that creep upon the earth, much more will he take care of his Covenant-Saints. He is still consulting and projecting for their good; if they wander out of the way, he guides them; if they stumble, he holds them by the hand; if they fall, he raiseth them; if they be dull, he quickens them by his Spirit; if they be froward, he draws them with cords of Love; if they be sad, he Comforts them with his promises.

3. If God saith to us, *ye are mine*, then he will intirely love us, *Jer. 31. 3.* *I have loved thee with an Everlasting love.* The Lord may give a man riches and not love him: his prosperity may be as *Israels Quails* sawced with Gods wrath. *Num.*

II. 32.

11. 32, 33. But when God saith, *ye are mine*, he cannot but love; every one loves his own. If God hath any love better than other, his Covenant-People shall have it; he will distil the Spirits of his love for them, he loves them as he loves Christ, *John 17. 24.*

4. If God saith to us *ye are mine*, then he will not suffer us to want. Believers are not only of Gods family, but of Christs body; and will the head let the body starve? *Psalms 37.*

3. *Verily thou shalt be fed.* God hath not promised *dainties*; he will not satisfy his Peoples lusts, but he will supply their wants; if the Bill of Fare grows low, what they lack in *cheer*, they shall have in *blessing*, *Exod. 23.*

25. *He will bless thy bread and thy water.* God will rather work a miracle, than any of his Children shall famish. The Raven that is so unnatural she will hardly feed her young, yet did turn Caterer and brought food to the Prophet *Elijah.*

5. If God saith to us, *ye are mine*, then we have great immunities: 1. We are freed from the revenging wrath of God. We are not free from Gods

M 4

anger

anger as a *Father*, but as a *Judge*. God will not pour his vindictive Justice upon us. Christ hath drunk the Red wine of Gods wrath upon the Cross, that Believers may not tast a drop of it.

2. We are freed from the Predominancy of sin, *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have dominion*, or as the word is *ἐνδύει*, it shall not Lord it over you. Though Believers are not freed from the In-being of sin, nor from the Combat with it, yet they are freed from its Imperious command. As it is said of those beasts in *Daniel*, they had their *Dominion* taken away, yet *their Lives were prolonged for a season*, *Dan. 7. 12*. So sin Lives in the Regenerate, but *its Dominion is taken away*. And to be thus freed from the jurisdictional power and tyranny of sin is no small blessing. A Wicked man is at the command of sin, as the Ase is at the command of the driver: the curse of *Cham* is upon him, *Gen. 9. 25. A Servant of Servants shall he be*. He is a slave to his Lusts, and a slave to Satan. O what a priviledge is it to have ones neck out of the Devils Yoak!

3. We

3. We are freed from the accusations of Conscience. The worm of Conscience is part of the Torment of Hell *. But God being our God we are freed from the Clamors of this hellish Fury: Conscience sprinkled with Christs blood speaks Peace; a good Conscience like the Bee gives Hony; it is like the *Golden pot* which had Manna in it, 2 Cor. I. 12.

† Tandem
flagitia in
supplicia
vertuntur,
Tacitus.

6. If God saith to us ye are mine, we shall be his for ever, Psalm 48.

14. *This God is our God for ever and ever.* You cannot say you have health and you shall have it for ever, you have a Child and you shall have it for ever; but if God be your God, you shall have him for ever. The Covenant of Grace is *Sacrum diploma*, a Royal Charter, and this is the Happiness of it, it is eternized †. The interest between God and his people shall never be broken off; How false therefore is the Opinion of falling from Grace! Shall any that God makes his *own* by Federal union, Fall finally? Indeed if Salvation hath no better Pillar to rest upon than mans will (as the *Arminians* hold) no wonder if there be falling away;

† Justificatio
nunquam
rescinditur.

but

על
בית

† Aliud est
recedere, ali-
ud excidere
a gratia,
Aug.

but a Christians stability in Grace, is built upon a surer basis, namely, Gods inviolable Covenant, *Isa. 55. 3.** Once in Christ and ever in Christ. A Star may sooner fall out of its orb than a true Believer be pluck'd away from God *.

7. If God saith to us *ye are mine*, he will take us up to himself at death. Death breaks the union between the Body and the Soul, but perfects the union between God and the Soul. This is the Emphasis of Heavens Glory, to be with God. What is the Joy of the blessed, but to have a clear transparent sight of God, and to be in the sweet and soft embraces of his love for ever? This hath made the Saints desire death, as the Bride the wedding day, *Phil. 1. 23.* Lead me, Lord, to that glory (said an Holy man) a glimpse whereof I have seen as in a glass darkly.

2 Use.
Comfort.

Let this be a Consolatory to the Saints ; there is a Covenant-union between God and them, God is theirs and they are his, *they shall be mine saith the Lord.* Here is a standing cordial for the Godly, God looks upon them as having a propriety in them, *they*

they shall be mine. This is Comfort
1. In respect of Satans accusations; he accuseth the Saints first *to God*, then *to themselves*; but if God saith *ye are mine*, this answers all Satans Bills of Indictment. Christ will shew the debt-book crossed in his blood. It was a saying of Bucer, I am Christs, and the Devil hath nothing to do with me.

2. It is Comfort in respect of Poverty? Believers are match'd into the Crown of Heaven, and all that is in God is theirs. The Philosopher comforted himself with this, that though he had no Musick or Vine-trees, yet he had the household Gods with him*: So though we have not the *Vine* or *Fig-tree*, yet if God be *ours* and we are *his*, this Creates joy in the most indigent condition.

* *Ex Sa 2*
of Gods in
any

And that which may raise the comfort of the godly higher, and cause a jubilation of Spirit is, that shortly God will *own* his people before all the world, and say, *these are mine*. At present the elect are not known, 1 *John* 3. 2. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* The Saints are like Kings in disguise; but

but how will their hearts leap for joy, when God shall pronounce that word, *these are mine*; These the lot of Free-grace is fallen upon, these shall lye for ever in the Bosom of my love.

2 Use.

To all who are yet strangers to God: Labour to get into Covenant with him that he may say, *ye are mine*. Why doth God woo and beseech you by his Ambassadors, if he were not willing to be in Covenant?

Quest. What shall a poor forlorn Creature do, to get into Covenant with God?

Ans. 1. If you would be in Covenant with God, break off the Covenant with sin, 1 Sam. 7.3. What King will be in league with him that holds correspondence with his Enemy?

2. Labour for Faith; 1. Faith in the Mercy of God, Jer. 3. 12. *I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever*. As the Sea covers great Rocks as well as little Sands; so Gods Mercy covers great sins: Manasseh a bloody sinner was held forth as a pattern of Mercy. Some of the Jews who had an hand in Crucifying of Christ, yet their sins were forgiven.

2. Faith in the merit of Christ.
Christ's

Christs blood is not only *ἱστα* but *ἱλασμός*:
not only a *Sacrifice* to appease God,
but a *Propitiation* to ingratiate us in-† 1 John
to Gods favour, and make him look 2. 2.
upon us with a smiling aspect.

CHAP. XVIII.

*The Second part of the Saints Re-
ward, Gods Honouring them.*

2. **T**HE Second part of the Saints
reward is Gods *Honouring* them,
*in that day when I make up my Jew-
els*: Here are three Propositions;

1. That God hath a great honour
for his People.
2. That Gods People are his Jew-
els.
3. That there is a day when God
will make up his Jewels.

1st. That God hath a great honour for
his People. He speaks of them here
with Honour, *in that day when I make
up*

up my Jewels, Isai. 43. 4. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable: Honour attends Holiness. That the Lord doth highly honour the fearers of him, is evident by four demonstrations.

1. In that he prefers them before others. He chooseth them, and passeth by the rest, *Mal. 1. 2. Was not Jacob Esaus brother? (saith the Lord,) yet I hated Esau and loved Jacob.*

2. In that God gives them frequent Visits. 'Tis counted an Honour for a Subject to have his Prince Visit him. *1 John 3. 3. Our κοινωνία or Communion is with the Father and his Son Jesus.* The Rabbins say, Moses had an Hundred and fifty conferences with God, and died with a Kiss from Gods mouth. What greater Honour for a Person, than to have God keep him Company? *Exod. 33. 11.*

3. In that God makes them Rich heirs; *Rom. 8. 17. συγκληρονόμοι, joynt heirs with Christ.* For a man to adopt another and make him heir to his estate, is no small honour done to him. The Youngest Believer is an heir, yea, and an Heir of the Crown,
1 Pet.

1 Pet. 5. 4. This Crown he hath in promisso, in the Promise, Rev. 2. 10. And in primitiis, in the first-fruits, Rom. 8. 23.

4. In that God sends his Angels to be their Servitors. Such as are Gods Servants have Angels to be theirs: Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all ministering Spirits sent forth to Minister for them who shall be heirs of Salvation?*

Who would not be fearers of God? ^{1 Use.} this makes God have an honourable esteem of them; all men (saith Chrysostome) are ambitious of Honour*: ^{* Τῆς δόξης ἀπολαύειν ὁρᾷ γοῦσαι.} the true Honour comes from God, John 5. 44.

If God doth so Honour his People, let them Honour him; Mal. 1. 6. *Where is my Honour?* let the Saints be God-exalters, let them lift up his Name in the World, and make his praise glorious, Psalm 66. 2. But I only glance at this.

2^{ly}. That Gods People are his Jewels, in that day when I make up my Jewels. Jewels are precious things; the Hebrew word for Jewels מַלְּאָכִים signifies a treasure. A treasure is made up of costly things: Gold and Pearl, and Rubies: such

such a precious Treasure are the Saints to God.

Quest. In what fence are the Godly Jewels?

Ans. 1. They are Jewels for their *sparkling quality* †. Their Holiness shines and sparkles in Gods eyes, *Cant.* 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thine eyes, that is, one of thy Graces.*

† *Splendore.* 2. The Godly are Jewels for their *Raritate.* *Scarcity* †. Pearls are not common; so the Godly are scarce and Rare: there are but few of these to be found: there are many false Professors (as there are Bastard Diamonds) but few *Israelites indeed*; *Mat.* 20. 16. *Few are Chosen.* Among the Millions in *Rome*, there were but few Senators: among the swarms of People in the World, but few Believers.

3. The Godly are Jewels for their *Price* *. Queen *Cleopatra* had two Jewels that contained half the price of a Kingdom. Thus the Saints are Jewels for their Value: God esteems them at an high rate, he parted with his best Jewel for them; Christs precious blood was shed to ransom these Jewels.

4. The

4. The Saints are Jewels, for their *adorning quality* †. Jewels adorn them † *Orna* that wear them: the Saints are *mento.* Jewels that adorn the World. Their Piety mixed with Prudence honours the Gospel. Hypocrites Eclipse Religion and make it evilly spoken of: the Saints as Jewels render it illustrious by their Sanctity.

1. See the worth of the Godly, they ^{1 Use.} are Jewels; they are a *Royal diadem* ^{Inform.} in the hand of God, *Isa. 62. 3.* That is, they are eminent above others, as a Crown hung with Jewels is an ensign of the highest state and Honour. The Saints are Gods *Glory*, *Isa. 46. 13.* As if Gods Glory did lye in them.

2. See then that which may bring ^{2 Branch.} Holiness into repute, and make us become Profelytes to it. It casts a splendour upon us, and makes God number us among his Jewels. Some are loath to embrace Godliness for fear it will be a stain to their Reputation, and bring them out of favour with great men: you see how it doth raise a persons renown, it makes him *precious in Gods sight*, he is a Jewel. Believers in regard of their mystical
N union

union with Christ, have a preciousness above the Angels: the Angels are *Morning Stars*, Job 38. 7. Believers are *clothed with the Sun* of Righteousness, Rev. 12. 1.

3 Branch.

See the different Opinion that God hath of the Godly and the Wicked: the one he esteems precious, the other vile, *Nahum* 1. 14. *I will make thy Grave, for thou art Vile*: this is spoken of King *Senacherib*: though he was by Birth Noble, yet he was by sin Vile.

קלות

The Hebrew word for *Vile**, signifies, *of base esteem*. Though the Wicked are high in dignity and worldly grandure, yet God flights them. A dunghil may be higher than other ground, but it sends forth noisom Vapours: *Psalms* 14. 3. *They are altogether become filthy*. In the Original it is, they are become

נאלחו

*stinking**. The Wicked are compared to *Dogs and Swine*, 2 Pet. 2. 22. to *dross*, Ezek. 22. 19. Dross is the filth of the Mettal*. Sinners are compar'd to *Chaff*, Psal. 1. 4. When a Wicked man dies, there is only a little Chaff blown away. A sinner is the most contemptible thing in nature; there is no worth in him while he lives, and

* Scoria est
m. & illi Sor-
des.

and no loss of him when he dies. A
sinner is worse than a Toad or Serpent;
A Toad hath nothing but what God
hath put into it, but a Wicked man
hath that which the Devil hath put
into him: *Act 5. 3. Why hath Satan
filled thy Heart to lye to the Holy-
Ghost?*

See what an high estimate we should ^{4 Branch.}
set upon the Godly, they are Jewels,
they are the Glory of the Creation:
they are compared to Stars for their
beauty, *Rev. 1. 20.* to Spice Trees
for their perfume, *Cant. 4. 14.* They
are the *Chariots and Horsmen* of Israel, ^{2 King 2.}
they are the *excellent of the Earth*, ^{12.}
Psalms 16. 3. The Lord would soon
break up house in the World, but that
he hath some Jewels in it. Prize the
Saints though they are humbled with
Poverty: we esteem of a Pearl though
it lye in the dust: *John Baptist* was
girt with a Leathern Girdle; yet he
was a Jewel, *Mat. 11. 9.* He was
the Morning Star, to usher in the Sun
of Righteousness into the World. The
Saints are precious, for they are Gods
lesser Heaven, *Isa. 57. 15.*

5. See the Saints Safety: they are ^{5 Branch.}
N 2 Gods

Gods Jewels, and he will have a care to preserve them. A man is careful that he doth not lose his Jewels. God often gives his people a *temporal* Salvation: if a storm comes he knows how to hide his Jewels. He hid an hundred Prophets in a Cave, 1 *Kin.* 18. 4. The Angel is commanded before he poured his Vial of curses on the earth, *to seal the Saints of God on their fore-heads*, Rev. 7. 3. Which was *signum salutare* a mark of *safety*: however God will look to the *Spiritual* safety of his Jewels, Job. 17. 12. *Not one of them is lost.*

6 Branch.

If the Saints are Gods Jewels, then how incensed and enraged will God be against those who shall abuse these Jewels? *Theodosius* counted them Traitors who abused his Statue: what will become of them who persecute Gods Saints, and tread upon his Jewels? It goes near to God to see his Jewels sprinkled with blood: what is done to them the Lord takes it as done to himself, *Act.* 9. 4. *Why persecutest thou me?* When the foot was trod on, the head cried out. The Saints are Gods *Royal* *diadem* *. Will a King endure to have his

* *Ia. 623. diadem* *.

his Robes spit upon, or his Crown-royal thrown in the dust? *Psalm 105. 14. He reprov'd Kings for their sakes. What Monuments of Gods Vengeance were Nero, Dioclesian, Gardner, and the rest of that persecuting tribe? Luke 18. 7. Shall not God avenge his own elect? I tell you he will avenge them speedily. Persecutors stand in the place where all Gods Arrows fly, Psalm 7. 13. He ordaineth his Arrows against the Persecutors. That is a killing Scripture, Zach. 13. 12. And this shall be the Plague wherewith God will smite all the People, that have fought against Jerusalem, their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their Tongues shall consume away in their Mouth.*

Here is Comfort to the people of God, in case of the Worlds disesteem of them, yet God values them as Jewels; and his Judgment is according to truth, Rom. 2. 2. The Wicked have low Thoughts of the Righteous, they beat down the price of these Jewels what they can, they think them the

^{2 Use.}
Consolati-
on.

refuse and scurfe, they disdain them, load them with slanders and Invectives: the Prophet *Elijah* was looked upon by King *Ahab* as the *Troubler of Israel*, 1 Kin. 18. 17. And *Luther* was called a *Trumpet of Rebellion*; St. Paul was Judged a *Pestilent fellow*, Acts 24. 5. The Wicked think of all things in the World the Saints may be best spared: 1 Cor. 4. 13. *We are made as men of filth and off-savouring of all things*: but this is *Vinum in pectore*, a great consolation to Believers, that as low esteem as the reprobate world hath of them, yet God hath high Thoughts of them, he numbers them among his Jewels*. They are compared for their preciousness to *Gold and Silver*, Rev. 1. 20. They are the Coyn and Medals that bear Gods own Image. They are *Princes in all Lands*, Psalm 45. 16. Christ engraves their Names on his breast, as the Names of the twelve Tribes were set with Precious Stones in Gold upon *Aarons Breast-plate*. God will give *whole Kingdoms* to ransom his jewells, *Isa.* 43. 3. The wicked think the Godly are not worthy to live in the world, *Acts* 22.

* *Peculium*
 & κεφάλαιον
 ov Dei.
 Corn. lap.

21. and God thinks the World is not worthy of them, *Heb. II. 38.* Hence it is God takes away his Jewels so fast, and placeth them among the Cherubims.

To the People of God. Are you Gods Jewels? then I beseech you shine as Jewels: walk *anew* accurately, and Holily, *Phil. 2. 15. Among whom ye shine as lights in the World.* Such as are Gods Jewels should let the World see they have worth in them. O Christians, let your Lives be an Imitation of the Life of Christ. Such a Jewel was Mr. Bradford, Martyr, so humble and Innocent in his carriage, that at his death, many of the Papists could not refrain from Weeping. Are you Gods Jewels? do nothing that may Eclipse or Sully your lustre. When Professors are Proud, Envious, Censorious, when they break their promises, or Cheat their Creditors, these do not look like Saints: What will others say? These are the *Devils Lumber*, not Gods Jewels. O I beseech you who profess to be of an higher rank than others, Honour that *Wor-*

^{3 Use.}
Exhortati-
on.
^{1 Branch.}

thy name by which you are called; shine as earthly Angels, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *But ye are a Royal Priesthood, a peculiar People that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you.* Alexander would have the Grecians known not only by their *Garments*, but their *Virtues*. Gods people should be known by the sparkling of their Graces: shall there be no difference in behaviour between the Wicked and the Godly? between a clod of Earth and a Diamond? let it appear that you are Candidates for Heaven: you who are Gods People, the Lord expects some *Singular thing* from you, Mat. 5. 47. He looks that you should bring more Glory to him, and by your exemplary Piety make Profelytes to Religion.

2 Branch.

It exhorts the Godly to thankfulness. God hath taken you out of the rubbish of mankind, and made you Jewels, Psalm 113. 7. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, that he may set him with Princes*: let me allude, God hath raised you out of the dust of a natural Estate, and ennobled you, that he may set you with Angels those Princes above. O admire God, set the Crown

Crown of your praises upon the head of Free-grace. A Gratulatory thankful frame of Heart is pleasing to God: if Repentance be the Joy, Praise is the *Musick* of Heaven. Bless God who hath wrought such a change in you, and of lumps of Earth and sin hath made you Jewels.

The Third Proposition is, That there *Thirdly.* is a time shortly coming when God will make up his Jewels; *in that day when I make up my Jewels:* Here are two Questions.

1. What is meant by Gods making up his Jewels?
2. What is *that day when God will make up his Jewels?*

1. What is meant by Gods making up his Jewels? There is a difference between these two, Gods making of Jewels, and his making up of Jewels. Gods making of Jewels, is, when he works Grace, but what is Gods making up of Jewels? *Quest.*

Gods making up his Jewels implies two things. *Ans.*

I. Gods

1. Gods gathering his Saints together.
2. Gods perfecting his Saints.

1. Gods making up his Jewels implies his *gathering* his Saints together. The Godly in this life are like scattered Pearls, they lye distant one from another, and are dispersed into several Regions: but there is a day coming, when God will gather all his Saints together, as one puts all his Pearls together on a string. There must be such an aggregation or gathering together Gods scattered Saints,

1. From the near Relation they have to all the Persons in the Trinity: 1. To God the Father; he hath chosen these Jewels and set them apart for himself, *Psalms* 4. 3. and will he lose any of his Elect? 2. They are related to Christ; he hath bought these Jewels with his blood, and will he lose his purchase? 3. They are related to the Holy Ghost; he hath sanctified them. When they were a lump of sin, he made them Jewels; and when he hath bestowed cost on them, will he lose his cost? will he not

not string these Pearls, and put them in his celestial Cabinet?

2. There must be a gathering together Gods scattered Saints, from the Prayer of Christ. It was Christs prayer to his Father, that he would make up his Jewels; that he would gather together his Pearls, that they might be with him in Heaven, *John 17. 24. That they may be with me where I am.* Christ thinks long, till all the Elect Jewels lye together in his bosom. He thinks not himself compleat, till all his Saints be with him.

Here is a Sovereign Comfort to the People of God in two cases. *Use.*

1. In case of Scattering.

2. In case of Dividing.

1. In case of *Scattering*. Gods people are scattered up and down in the World: and, which is worst, these Jewels lye among rubbish, they dwell among the Wicked, *Psalms 120. 5. Wo is me that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar. Kedar was Ishmaels Son. Woe is me (saith David) that I live with an Ishmael-brood. The Wicked are still molest-*

molesting the Righteous : Gods Jewels lye scattered among the unclean ; but here is the Comfort, that shortly God will gather his People from among the Wicked, he will make up his Jewels, and all the Pearls and precious stones shall be by themselves in Bliss.

2. It is Comfort in case of *Dividing*. Gods People here are divided ; their love is so little it may almost lye upon a knives point : they oft look strange one upon another : these divisions are unseemly, and are flaws in Gods Diamonds. Discords among Christians, brings a reproach upon Religion, advanceth Satans Kingdom, hinders the growth of Grace. Divisions are fatal, and do presage Gods Judgments coming upon us.

*Impius hac tam culta novalia miles habebit
Barbarus, has segetes ? Enquò discordia crives
Perduxit miseros.*——

But this is Comfort, God will shortly make up his Jewels : he will so gather his Saints together, that he will

will *unite* them together, they shall be *ἑνωμένοι*, all of one Heart, Act 2. 46. What an happy time will it be when the Saints shall be as so many Pearls upon one string, and shall accord together in a blessed Unity!

2. Gods making up his Jewels implies his *perfecting* his Saints. Then a thing is said to be made up when it is perfected; you make up a Garment when you perfect it; you make up a Watch, when you put all the Wheels and Pins in perfect order: so Gods making up his Jewels signifies his perfecting them. The Godly in this Life are imperfect, they cast but a faint lustre of Holiness, they receive but the *first-fruits of the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 23. that is, a small measure of Grace: the first-fruits under the Law were but an handful to the whole Vintage. This may humble us to consider if we are Jewels, yet imperfect: our knowledge is checker'd with Ignorance, 1 Cor. 13. 5. Our love to God is feeble. Behold here *Clouds* in the Diamond. This may take down our Top-sail of Pride, to consider how incomplete we are: but when God shall
make

make up his Jewels, and perfect his Saints, it will be a glorious time, and this brings me to the second Question.

2 *Quest.* What is that day when God will make up his Jewels?

Ans. 1. God makes up his Jewels at the day of Death, then he makes the Saints Graces perfect.

2. He makes up His Jewels at the day of the Resurrection, then he makes the Saints Bodies perfect.

1. God makes up His Jewels at the day of *death*, then he makes the Saints *Graces* perfect. Hence it is the Saints departed are called *the Spirits of just men made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. Sin doth mix and incorporate with a Christian, he cannot write a Copy of Holiness without blotting. Grace, though it doth *abate*, yet not *abolish* Corruption: but at Death God makes up His Jewels; he perfects the Graces of his People. Will not that be a blessed Time, never to have a Vain thought more? never to be within the sight of a temptation or the fear of a Relapse? This me thinks may make death desirable to the Godly; then the Lord will make

up his Jewels, he will compleat the Graces of his Children; they shall be as holy as they desire to be, and as God would have them to be. How will Gods Diamonds sparkle when they shall be without flaws? In that day of death when God makes up His Jewels, the Saints

1. Light will be clear,
2. Love will be perfect.

1. Their Light will be clear. They shall be so divinely irradiated, that they shall know the *τὰ βλάστη, the deep things* of God. They shall in this sence be *ὡς ἄγγελοι, as the Angels*, Mat. 22. 30. Their Intellectuals shall be raised higher, and made more capacious than in Innocency. Through the Chrystal Glas of Christs Humane Nature the Saints shall have Glorious transparent sights of God: *they shall know as they are known*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. A riddle too mysterious for us Mortals, if not for Angels to expound.

2. In that day the Saints Love will be perfect: Love is the Queen of the Graces, it out-lives all the other Graces.

In

In this life our love to God is lukewarm, and sometimes Frozen; a Believer weeps that he can love God no more: but at the day of death when God makes up his Jewels, then the Saints love shall be Seraphical: the spark of Love shall be blown up into a pure flame: the Saints shall love God *secundum actum* (as the *Schoolmen* speak) as much as they are able: they shall love him superlatively, and indeficiently, they shall be made up of love. O blessed day of death! when God shall make up his Jewels, the Saints Graces shall shine forth in their Meridian Splendour.

2. God makes up his Jewels at the day of the *Resurrection*, then he makes the Saints *bodies* perfect: these like sparkling Diamonds shall shine in Glory. At the Resurrection God is said to *change* the bodies of the Saints, *Phil.* 3. 21. How will he change them? not that they shall be other bodies than they were before: the *substance* of their bodies shall not be changed, but the *qualities*: as wooll when it is died into a Purple colour, is not altered in the substance, but quality, and

and is made more illustrious; so God in making up his Jewels will cause a greater resplendency in the Saints bodies than before. When God makes up the Jewels of the Saints Bodies at the Resurrection, they shall be perfect four ways.

1. In Amability or sweetness of Beauty. Here the Bodies of the Righteous are oft deformed; *Leah* hath her blear Eyes, and *Barzillai* his lameness; but at the Resurrection the bodies of the Saints shall be of unspotted fairness: and no wonder, for they shall be made like *Christs Glorious body*, Phil. 3. 21.

2. When God at the Resurrection makes up the Jewels of the Saints bodies, they shall have Perfection of parts. Their bodies in this World may be maimed and dismembred; but in the day of the Resurrection they shall have all the parts of their bodies restored, *Acts* 3. 21. Such as have lost an Eye, shall have their Eye again; such as want a Leg or an Arm, shall have their Arm again.

3. When God makes up the Jewels of the Saints bodies at the Resurrection,

O

rection, they shall be Velocious and quick in their Motion. Here the Bodies of the Saints move heavily : but then they shall be sprightly , and move swiftly from one place to another. Here the body is a *Weight* ; in Heaven it shall be a *Wing*.

4. When God makes up the Jewels of the Saints bodies, they shall be *Immortal* : the Body once Glorified shall never be Subject to death, 1 Cor. 15. 53. *This corruptible shall put on Incorruption*. Heaven is an healthful Climate, no Passing-Bell goes there: *this mortal shall put on Immortality*.

Usc. Let us labour to be in the number of Gods Jewels, that when the Lord shall make up his Jewels, he may perfect our Souls and Bodies in Glory.

Quest. How shall we know that we are in the number of Gods Jewels?

Answ. Have we inherent Holiness? 1 Cor. 6. 11. *But ye are washed, but ye are Sanctified*. We are not Jewels by *Creation*, but *Regeneration*. If Holiness sparkle in us, it's a sign we are Jewels ; and then when God comes to make up his Jewels, he will put Glory upon our Souls and Bodies for ever.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

The Third part of the Saints Reward, Gods sparing them.

3. **T**HE Third part of the Saints reward is Gods *Sparing* them. *I will spare them as a man spareth his own Son that serveth him.* The Hebrew word to *spare** signifies to *use Clemency*: In this Phrase is a *Meiosis*, there is less said and more intended; *I will spare them*, that is, I will deal with them as a Father doth with his Son: the same tenderness that a Father shews to his Child, the same will I shew to them that Fear me.

God will deal with them that Fear him, as a Father doth with his Son. *Doct.*
Two things are in this Proposition.

1. That God is a *Father*. He is a Father, 1. By *Creation*, he hath given us our Being, *Mal. 2. 10. Have not we all one Father? hath not one God created us?*

O 2

2. God

2. God is a Father by *Election* ; he hath culled out a certain number to be his Children, *Eph. 1. 4.*

3. God is a Father by *special Grace*, he stamps his impress of Holiness upon men, *Col. 3. 10.* All Gods Children resemble him, though some are more like him than others.

2. That God will deal with them that Fear him, as a Father doth with his Son: 1. God will accept them as a Father doth his Son. If the Child doth but lisp and can hardly speak plain, the Father takes all well: so God as a Father will accept of what his Children do in sincerity : *Ezek. 20. 40. There will I require your Offerings, I will accept you with your sweet Savour.*

2. Such as Fear God, he will be full of Bowels to them as a Father is to his Son. There are in God

1. Bowels of Compassion.

2. Bowels of Complacency.

1. *Bowels of Compassion.* A Father Compassionates his Child. *Sozomen* makes mention of a Father who offered

ed. to be put to death for his two Sons, who were sentenced to dye : God hath *soundings of Bowels*, Isa. 63. 15. The Compassions of Parents are Steel and Marble compared with Gods : Luke 1. 78. *Through the tender Mercy of our God* : in the Greek it is *σπλαγχνὰ ἐλέειν*, the Bowels of Mercy : these Bowels make God sympathize with his Children in Misery : he is touched in their wounds, Psal. 103. 13. *As a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*

2. In God are Bowels of Complacency. How dearly did Jacob love Benjamin ; his life was bound up in him, Gen. 44. 30. All the Affections of Parents come from God : they are but a drop of his Ocean, a spark of his flame ; Gods love is a love that *passeth Knowledge*, Ephes. 3. 19. The Saints cannot Love their own Souls so intirely as God loves them. In particular,

1. God loves the *persons* of his Children : they are the *Apple of his Eye*, Zach. 2. 8. He *engraves them upon the Palms of his hands*, Isa. 49. 16. It alludes to them who carry about them graven on the Stone of their

O 3

Ring

Ring the Picture of some dear Friend whom they intirely affect.

2. God loves the *places* his Children were born in the better for their sakes : *Psal.* 87. 2. *God loves the Gates of Sion* : ver. 5. *This and that man was born in her* ; (i. e.) *This and that Believer.* God loves the very ground his Children go upon. Why was *Judæa* (the Ancient seat of *Israel*) called a *delightful Land* ? *Mal.* 5. 12. Not so much delightful for the fruit growing in it, as for the Saints living in it.

3. God so loves his Children that he chargeth the great ones of the World upon pain of death *not to hurt* them : their persons are sacred, *Psalms* 105. 14. *He reprov'd Kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed.* By *anointed*, are meant such as have the *anointing of the Spirit*, 1 *John* 2. 20.

4. God delights in his Childrens company, he loves to see their faces, *Cant.* 2. 24. *Let me see thy Countenance.* If but two or three of Gods Children meet and pray together, God will be sure to make one of the company ; *Mat.* 18. 20. *There am I in the midst of them.*

5. God

5. God so loves his Children, that his Eye is never off them; *Psalms* 33.

18. *The Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him.* But is this such a privilege, to have Gods Eye upon his Children? Gods Eye is upon the Wicked too. *Answ.* It is one kind of Eye that the Judge casts upon the Malefactor, and another that the Prince casts upon his Favourite. Gods Eye upon the Wicked is *ὀφθαλμὸς ὀργῆς*, an Eye of Revenge; but his Eye upon his Children is an Eye of Benediction.

6. God sets a *continual guard* about his Children, to preserve them from danger. He hides them in his *Pavilion*, *Psalms* 27. 5. He covers them with the Golden Feathers of his Protection, *Psalms* 91. 4. God preserved *Athanasius* strangely, he put it into his Mind to depart out of the House he was in, the night before the Enemies came to search for him. No Prince goes so well guarded as Gods Child, for he hath a guard of Angels about him. The Angels are a *numerous guard*, 2 *Kin.* 6. 17. *The Mountain was full of Horses and Chariots of fire: those Horses and Chariots of fire were the Angels of*

God, gathered together in the manner of an huge host to defend the Prophet *Elisba*.

7. God puts his Children in *rich apparel*: Psalm 45. 13. *Her cloathing is of wrought Gold*. Jacob loved his Son *Joseph*, and gave him a finer Coat to wear than the rest of his brethren, Gen. 37. 3. *He made him a Coat of divers Colours*. God loves his Children and gives them a finer Coat, more curiously Woven, a Coat of *divers Colours*: it is partly made of Christ's Righteousness, and partly made of inherent Holiness*.

* Rev. 19.
8.

8. Such is God's love, that he thinks nothing too Good for his Children, he enricheth them with the *upper* and *nether* Springs; he gives them the *Kidneys of the Wheat*, and Hony out of the Rock; he makes them a feast of *fat things*, Isa. 25. 6. He gives them the body and blood of his Son, and delights to see his Children spreading themselves as Olive plants round about his Table*.

* Psalm
123. 3.

3. Such as are Fearers of God, he will receive their *Petitions* from them as a Father doth from his Son; they may

may come *boldly to the throne of Grace*, Heb. 4. 16. If they come for pardon of sin, strength against Temptation, God will not deny them. Three things may cause boldness in prayer; the Saints have a Father to pray to, and the Spirit to help them to pray, and Jesus Christ as their Advocate to present their Prayers.

4. Such as are Fearers of God, God will bestow an *Inheritance* upon them, as a Father doth upon his Son: this Inheritance is no less than a *Kingdom*, Luke 12. 32. In it are *Gates of Pearl*, *Rivers of Pleasure*: and which is to be noted as a difference between Gods settling an Inheritance on his Children, and a Fathers settling an Inheritance: a Son cannot enjoy the Inheritance till his Father be dead; but every-adopted child of God may at once enjoy both the Inheritance and the Father, because God is both *Father and Inheritance* *.

* Gen. 15.

5. Such as are Fearers of God, God ^{1.} will *pass by many* infirmities. That is meant by this expression in the Text, *I will spare them as a man spareth his own Son*. What a wonder is this, that God did not spare the Angels! 2 Pet. 2. 4.

2. 4. Nay, he did not spare his *natural Son*, Rom. 8. 32. Yet he will spare his Adopted Sons: *I will spare them*, I will not use extremity as I might, but pass by many aberrations.

Caution.

Not that the Sins of Gods Children are hid from him; but such is his paternal Clemency, that he is pleased to bear with many frailties in his Children. *He spareth them as a Father spareth his Son*. How often do Gods people grieve his Spirit by the neglect of their Spiritual Watch, the loss of their first-love; but God spares them! *Israel* provoked God with their murmurings, but he used Fatherly Indulgence towards them, *Psalms* 78. 38. *But he being full of Compassion, forgave their Iniquity, yea many a time turned he his anger away from them**.

* Neh. 9.

17.

1 Use.

Inform.

1 Branch.

From this word, *I will spare them as a man spares his Son*, take Notice, that the best need sparing, *Psalms* 130. 3. *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark Iniquities, Lord, who shall stand?* The Papists speak of *Merits*, but how can we merit when our best services are so defective that we need sparing? how can these two stand together, *our meriting* and

and God's *sparing*? what will become of us without *sparing* Mercy? we had need pray as *Nehemiah*, cap. 13. 22. *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy Mercy.* Let us fly to this *Asylum*, Lord spare us as a *Father* spares his *Son*.

See Gods different dealing with ^{2 Branch} the Godly and the Wicked; the Lord will not spare the Wicked, *Jer.* 13. 14. *I will not Pity, nor spare, nor have Mercy, but destroy them.* 'Tis sad, when the Prisoner begs of the Judge to spare him, but the Judge will shew him no favour. Gods cup of wrath is *unmixed*, *Rev.* 14. 10. Yet it is said to be *mixed*, *Psal.* 78. 5. Gods cup of wrath he gives the Wicked is mixed with all sorts of Plagues, but it is a Cup *unmixed*, without the least drop of Mercy in it. God for a while *Reprieves* men, but *forbearance* is no *forgiveness*. Though God spare his Children, yet obdurate sinners shall feel the weight of his wrath.

If the Lord spares his people as a ^{3 Branch} Father doth his Son, then they should serve him as a Son doth his Father: serve him willingly, *1 Chron.* 28. 9. *Know thou*

thou the God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a willing mind. God doth not love to be put to strain*. Therefore *Cains* Sacrifice was rejected, because he brought it grudgingly, and against his Mind: it was rather the paying of a tax than a free-will Offering. That is the best obedience which is voluntary, as that is the best Honey which drops from the Comb. God sometimes accepts of willingness without the Work†, but never of the work without willingness.

* *Virtus nolentium nulla est.*

† 1 King 8. 18.

* *Quicquid propter Deum fit, equaliter fit.*

* 2 King 5. 18.

2. Serve God *Universally*. True obedience is *Uniform*, it observes one command as well as another*, it sets upon duties *difficult* and *dangerous*. As the Needle points that way which the Loadstone draws: so a Gracious Heart inclines to those things which the word suggests; *Luke* 1. 6. 'Tis the note of an Hypocrite to be *partial* in Obedience; some sin he will indulge*, some duty he will dispense with, his Obedience is lame on one foot.

3. Serve God *Swiftly*: Beware of a dull temper of Soul; the loveliness of Obedience is in the liveliness: we read
of

of two Women, *Zach. 5. 9. The Wind was in their Wings*: Wings are Swift, but *Wind in the Wings* denotes great Swiftneſs; ſuch Swiftneſs ſhould be in our Obedience to God: If God ſpares us as a Father doth his Son, we ſhould ſerve him as a Son doth his Father.

If God Spares us as a Father doth his Son, let us imitate God. 'Tis natural for Children to imitate their Parents; look what the Father doth, the Child is apt to learn the ſame. Let us imitate God in this one thing, as God ſpares us, and paſſeth by many failures, ſo let us be ſparing in our Cenſures of others; let us look upon the Weakneſſes and Indiscretions of our Brethren with a more tender compaſſionate eye. Indeed, in caſe of Scandal, here we ought not to bear with others, but ſharply reprove them: But if through Inadvertency or Paſſion they commit Indecencies, let us Pity and Pray for them: How much doth God bear with in us! He Spares us, and ſhall not we be Sparing to others? perhaps they may be wronged, and falſe things may be laid to their Charge. *Athanaſius* was falſely Accuſed by the *Arrians*

2 Uſe.
Exhortation.

Arrians of Adultery, *Basil* of Heresie. 'Tis usual for the World to misrepresent the People of God; therefore let us be sparing in our Censures: God spares us, and shall not we be sparing towards others?

3 *Use.*
Comfort.

Here is Comfort to the Children of God in case of Failings: The Lord will not be severe to mark what they have done amiss, but will *Spare* them: He passeth by many Infirmities, *Zeph. 3. 17. He will rest in his Love*; in the Original it is, *He will be silent in his Love* *. As if the Prophet had said, Though the Church had her Failings, yet Gods Love was such, that it would not suffer him to mention them: *He will be silent in his Love*. God winks at many oversights, *Ezek. 20. 17. Mine eye Spared them from destroying them*. I speak not of presumptuous sins, but *Failings*, as vain Thoughts, deadness in Duty, suddain Surprizals by Temptation: these being mourned for, God for Christs sake will Spare us as a Father doth his Son *.

* *Sine enim aspiciat pater in filio, non ille extrahet de domo, Calv.*

This is one of the richest Comforts in the Book of God: Who is he that lives and sins not? how defective are we

we in our best Duties ! how full are our Lives either of *Blanks* or *Blots* ! Were it not for Sparing Mercy, we should all goe to Hell ; but this Text is a standing Cordial ; if our Hearts are sincere, God will Spare us as a Father doth his Son : *Hosea* 11. 9. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine Anger.* I know not a greater Rock of Support for a fainting Christian than this ; God will abate of the Severity of the Law ; though we come short in our Duty, he will not fail of his Mercy, but *will Spare us as a Father Spareth his Son.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

*Containing the Epiphonema, or shutting
up of the Chapter.*

MAL. III. 18.

*Then shall ye return, and discern between
the Righteous and the Wicked, between
him that Serveth God, and him that
Serveth him not.*

Here follows the close of the Chapter, which I shall little more than Paraphrase upon. These words are spoken to the wicked, as *Piscator*, *Calvin*, *Grotius*, and other learned Expositors assert : for though the Godly shall at last discern what a difference God makes between them and the Wicked, how Indulgent he is to the one, and how Severe to the other ; yet this Text is chiefly spoken to the Wicked, *vers.* 14. *Ye have said it is vain to Serve God ; and vers.* 15. *Now we call the Proud happy,*

happy, yea they that work Wickedness are set up: Well saith God, though now ye call the Proud happy and the Godly indiscreet, yet when I have made up my Jewels, then you Wicked ones shall see clearly what a Difference I make between the Righteous, and the Wicked, between him that Serveth God and him that Serveth him not.

Then, when it is too late, when the day of Grace is past, and the Drawbridge of Mercy is pulled up, then shall ye discern a difference between the Holy and the Prophane.

The Wicked at present have their ^{1 Doct.} Eyes shut, Deut. 29. 4. *The Lord hath not given you an Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear unto this day.* Natural men have the Sword upon their right Eye, Zach. 11. 17. They see no difference between the Pious and the Impious, they see not but it fares as well with the Wicked as the Righteous; nay, it seems to fare better, the wicked flourish, Psalm 73. 12. *These are the ungodly who prosper in the World, they increase in riches*; whereas they that Pray and Fast, are Oppressed. The Wicked bless themselves, and think
P they

they are now in a better condition than the Righteous ; the matter is not to be wondred at, for *the God of this World* hath *blinded* the minds of Sinners, 2 Cor. 4. 4. But at last their eyes shall be opened : and that brings me to the second ;

2 *Doff.* That there is a time shortly coming, when Impious flagitious Sinners shall see a sensible difference between the Godly and the Wicked. *Vertetur alea*, the Tables will then be turned : *Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked.*

Quest. When is the time when the Eyes of Sinners shall be opened, and they shall see a difference between the Righteous and the Wicked ?

Answ. There are two times when Sinners shall see a manifest difference between the Righteous and the Wicked.

1. At the day of Judgment.
2. At the hour of Separation.

* *Videbitis in die iudicii quantum diversa sit sors pii & impii.* Gro-rius.

1. At the *day of Judgment* ; That will be a day of *Discrimination* *. Things will then appear in their proper colours ; the difference will easily be seen be-

between good and bad; the one being Absolved, the other Condemned.

2. *At the hour of Separation*; When God shall Eternally Separate the Reprobate from the Elect, as a Fan separateth the Chaff from the Wheat, then shall there be a visible discerning between the Righteous and the Wicked, Mat. 25. 32. *Before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats.* Jesus Christ will take his Saints up with him into Glory, and will cast the Wicked down to Hell: He will make up the Godly as Jewels, and make up the Wicked in Bundles, Mat. 13. 30. Bind them in Bundles and burn them*.

Now Sinners shall be convinced with a Vengeance, that the State of the Righteous and Wicked is different: They shall see the Righteous advanced to a Kingdom, and themselves cast into a Fiery Prison. O the dreadfulneſs of that place of Torment! — *Et vox et verba deficiunt* — Could men lay their Ears to the *Infernal Lake*, and but for one hour hear the Groans and Shrieks of the Damned, they would tell us

* *Impii exoriantur ut exarantur.* Auſtin.

* *Spelæa*
nefarij in-
trant, ar-
dentis Phle-
getonte na-
tant.

that they now see what before they would not believe, the infinite difference between the *Righteous* and the *Wicked* *. In Hell is Torment upon Torment, *Blackness of darkness*, Jude 13. *Bonds and Chains*, 2 Pet. 2. 4. These *Chains* are Gods Decree ordaining, and his Power binding men under Wrath ; and that which doth accent and put a Sting into the Torments of the wicked is, that they shall be always Scorching in the Torrid Zone of Gods Wrath, *Revel. 14. 11. The Smoak of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.* Christ said of his Suffering on the Cross, *It is finished* ; But Sinners shall never say of their Sufferings in Hell, they are finished : no, imagine so many thousand Years the Damned have lain in Hell as there are drops in the Sea, Eternity is yet to begin.

1 Use.

This may inform all wicked men, that (how Blind soever they are now, yet) at last the Vail shall be taken from their Eyes : They now count themselves the only happy men, and look upon the People of God with Derision, they load them with Invectives, and Curse them with their Excommu-

communications : Well, the time is not far off, when the Wicked shall clearly discern who belong to Christ, and who belong to the Devil; as *Moses* said to *Korah* and his Company, *Numb.* 16. 5. *To morrow the Lord will shew who are his :* So at the day of Judgment the Lord will shew who are his, and who are not ; nay, sooner than so ; at the day of *Death* the Wicked shall guess how it is like to be with them to Eternity.

O that the Eyes of Sinners may be speedily opened, that they may in time see the difference of things, the Beauty that is in Holiness, and the Prodigy of madness that is in Sin.

Consolation to the Righteous. Though at present they are slighted, and have the Odium of the World cast upon them, yet shortly God will make a *Visible* difference between them and the Wicked ; as it was with *Pharaohs* two Officers, the Butler and the Baker ; at first there seemed to be no difference between them, but within a while there was a difference made ; the chief Butler was advanced to Honour, but the chief Baker was Executed,

2 Use.

Gen. 40. 21. So though now Gods People are low and despised, and the Wicked Insult over them, yet when the *Critical-day* comes, there shall be a final Separation made between the Righteous and the Wicked: the one shall be Dignified, the other Damned, *Mat. 25. 46.*

Be encouraged therefore, O ye Saints of God, to persist in a course of Holiness; though now ye seem to be lowermost, yet in the Resurrection ye shall be uppermost, *Psalms 49. 14. The Righteous shall have Dominion over them in the Morning*; They shall have Dominion over the Wicked in the Morning of the Resurrection. They shall then *Laugh the Wicked to Scorn*, *Psalms 52. 6.* Then shall the difference be seen between the Righteous and the Wicked, between him that Served God and him that Served him not.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

*Shewing Gods Gracious dealing with
His People.*

OR

A Consolatory in Affliction.

PSALM CXIX. 65.

*Thou hast dealt well with thy Servant,
O Lord.*

THe Psalms are the Marrow of the Bible, they are both for *Delight* and *Use*; like rich Cordials which do not only gratifie the Palate, but strengthen the Spirits. This Psalm is full of Divine and Spiritual matter: it was Composed, if not Sung by the *Sweet Singer of Israel*: The Words fall into two Parts.

P 4

1. Gods

1. Gods Kindness to *David*, He dealt well with him.

2. *David's* grateful acknowledgment of this Favour, *Thou hast dealt well with thy Servant O Lord.*

From Gods Kindness to *David*, observe

Dott. That God dealeth well with his People, *Gen. 33. 12. The Lord hath dealt graciously with me.* Gods People often walk unanswerable to his Love: but though they deal ill with God, God deals well with them.

Gods dealing well with his People ariseth from the Intrinsicall goodness of his Nature; *God is love, 1 John 4. 16.* From this flow all Acts of Royal Bounty.

Quest. Wherein doth Gods dealing well with his People appear?

Answ. In enriching them with variety of Mercies; his Footsteps drop *Fatness*, *Psalms 65. 11.* He *Feeds, Adopts, Crowns* them; and is not this dealing well with them?

Object. But how doth God deal well with the Saints, when he laies his hand so heavy upon them in Affliction? His pen is full of *Gall*, and he writes bitter

ter things against them, *Psalms* 73. 14. I am chastened every morning: how doth God deal well with his People, when it fares ill with them?

It must be held as an undoubted *Answ.* maxim, that when the Lord severely chastizeth the Saints, he deals well with them: but we are ready to Question this Truth, and say as the Virgin Mary to the Angel, *how can this be*; therefore I shall demonstrate it, that when it goes ill with the Righteous, yet God deals well with them.

1. When the Lord afflicts the Saints yet he deals well with them, because he is their God. *David* was in the deep of Sorrow, *Psal* 130. 1. Yet he could say, the Lord was his *Portion*, *Psalms* 16. 5. God is an exceeding great reward, *Gen.* 15. 1. He is a whole Paradise of delight—*Bonum in quo omnia bona*—He who hath God for his God, all his Estate lies in Jewels. If then God passeth over himself to his People by a *Deed of gift* to be their God, here is enough to counter-vail all their troubles: what can God give more than himself?

2. When it goes ill with the Godly,
yet

yet God deals well with them, because while he is inflicting evil upon them, he is doing them good. That which the Text renders, *thou hast dealt well with thy Servant*, in the Hebrew it is, *thou hast done good to thy Servant* * : Psalm 129. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted* : David doth not say, it is Good for me that I have been in prosperity, but *that I have been afflicted*. God doth his People good by Affliction Two ways ;

† Vexatio
dat intel-
lectum.

1. The Godly grow wiser †. Affliction is *schola lucis* ; it discovers that pride, earthliness, unmortified passion which they could not have believed was in their Hearts, Job 36. 8. *If they be held in cords of Affliction, then he shews them their Transgression*. Affliction cures the Eye-sight.

* ἡ θλί-
ψις ἀρε-
τὴν λαμβ-
άνουσα.
Chrysost.

2. Affliction promotes Holiness * : The more the Diamond is cut, the more it sparkles, Heb. 12. 10. *That we may be partakers of his Holiness*. When prosperity makes Grace rust, God scowres us with Affliction. The Godly are beholding to their Sufferings : God by the wholesome discipline of the Cross makes them more humble, more conformed to

to Christs Image: the sharp Frosts of Affliction bring on the spring Flowers of Grace: now if God while he is chastising is doing us good, then sure he deals well with us.

3. When God puts his Children to the School of the Cross, yet he deals well with them, because he doth not leave them without a Promise, 1 Cor.

10. 13. *God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.* God knows our frame, that we are imbecil and weak; our flesh is *not as brass*, Job 6 12. And the Lord will not try us above our strength, he will not lay a Giants burden upon a Childs back. God will not stretch the strings of his Viol too hard, lest they break: if God strike with one hand, he will support with the other, Cant. 8. 3. Either he will make our Yoak Lighter, or our Faith stronger. This Promise is *Hony at the end of the Rod.*

4. God deals well with his People when he afflicts, because Afflictions are *Preventive*. 1. They prevent sin, 2 Cor. 12. 7. *Lest I should be exalted above measure, there was given me a Thorn*

Thorn in the Flesh. Prosperity like *Opium* is ready to make men fall asleep in Sin, God awakens them by the Voice of the *Rod*, and so prevents a Spiritual Lethargy.

2. They prevent Hell, 1 Cor. 11. 32. *We are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the World.* Doth not a Judge deal well with a Prisoner, when he laies some light penalty on him and saves his Life? Is it not goodness in God, when he laies upon us *light Affliction*, and saves us from *Wrath to come*? 2 Cor. 4. 17. What is a drop of Sorrow the Godly tast of, to that bottomless Sea of Wrath the Wicked must drink?

5. When God corrects he deals well with his People, because all he doth is *in Love* *. Afflictions are (as *Gregory Nazianzen* saith) sharp Arrows, but they are shot from the hand of a loving Father. As Gods not afflicting the Wicked is in anger: Gods hand is Heaviest when it is lightest, *Hosea* 4. 14. *I will not punish your daughters when they commit Whoredom: A Father gives over correcting a Child whom he intends to disinherit: so Gods chastity*

* ἐν ἀγάπῃ
ἐκ τῆς
Chrysost.

chastizing the Godly is in Love, Rev. 3. 19. *As many as I Love I rebuke*; when God hath the Look of an Enemy, he hath the Heart of a Father. As when *Abraham* lift up his hand to Sacrifice *Isaac*, he loved him; so when God Sacrificeth the Comforts of his Children, he loves them. Was not God severe against Christ: yet it was proclaimed by a Voice from Heaven, *This is my beloved Son*, Mat. 3. 17. Well then, if God only send love-tokens to us, he deals well with us.

6. God deals well with his People when he afflicts them, because he moderates his stroke, Jer. 30. 11. *I will* * Jer. 46. *correct thee in Measure.* 1. God doth ^{28.} not smite his Children so much as he might, Psal. 78. 38. *He did not stir up all his Wrath*: God doth not make the Cup so bitter as he could. He useth *Lenitives* rather than *Corrosives*: he layes a lighter burden on, he might lay on an heavier. Doth God take away a Child? he might take away his Spirit; Doth he chastize the Body? he might torment the Conscience.

2. God doth not correct his Children

dren so much as they have deserved, *Ezra 9. 13. Thou hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve.* Doth God make us drink in a Cup of Wormwood? we have deserved to drink in a Cup of Wrath: doth God cut us short? we have deserved he should cut us off, *Ezek. 47. 3. The Waters were to the Ankles.* Do the Waters of Affliction come up to our Ankles? we have deserved to be drowned in these Waters.

7. When God afflicts his Children, he deals well with them, because he keeps them from Sinning in Affliction, *John 17. 15. I pray that thou keep them from the evil.*

1. The Godly are kept from *impatience*. When the Wicked are under Gods black Rod, they either *faint*: or *fret*, *Rev. 16. 9. Men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God*: but the Godly are silent under the Rod, *Levit. 10. 3. And Aaron held his Peace*: 'twas a sore Tryal, both his Sons were consumed with fire, but *Aaron held his Peace.* Gods People open their Ear to hear the *Voice of the Rod*, but shut their Mouth

Mouth, they have not one word to say against God.

2. The Godly dare not use any indirect means to extricate themselves out of Trouble. Wicked men, like Malefactors, care not how they get loose, they will sin themselves out of straits: the People of God had rather lye in the Furnace to have their dross purged, than come out too soon: they will not purchase the liberty of their Persons by insnaring their Consciences. Doth not God deal well with his Children in keeping them from sinning in Affliction? Affliction cannot do that mischief as sin doth: the one is like a rent in the Garment, the other is like a rent in the Flesh. Affliction may deprive us of our Estates, but Sin deprives us of our God.

8. God deals well with his Children in Affliction, because though he Correct them, he doth not forsake them. Indeed *Sion said, the Lord hath forsaken me*, Isa. 49. 14; But that was under a Temptation, *Lam. 3. 31. The Lord will not cast off for Ever*. God may alter his Providence, not his purpose: he may change his dispensation,
not

not his disposition, *Hof. 11. 8.* *How shall I give thee up O Ephraim?* It alludes to a Father who is about to disinherit his Son, but when he is going to set his hand to the deed, his bowels begin to Work; I am his Father, and though he be a Rebellious Son, yet he is a Son: how shall I disinherit him? Such are the Workings of Gods bowels to his Children; though he may give them a severe rebuke, yet he will not cut off the entail of Mercy.

9. God deals well with his Children in Affliction, because though their condition be sad, yet it is not so bad as others: the Lord puts a difference between the Chastisements of the Godly, and the Punishments of the Wicked: the Godly man hath *Pain* in his sickness, but the Wicked man hath *Wrath* in his sickness, *Eccles. 5. 17.* The Lord shoots a single Arrow at the Godly, but a whole shower of Arrows at the Wicked: he punisheth them in their Body, Estate, Conscience. A good man hath God to Pity him in his Sorrows, *Isa. 63. 9.* But the Wicked have God to laugh at them
in

in their Miseries, *Prov. 1. 26.* The Godly have Christ to pray for them, in their Afflictions; but the Impenitent when in Torment, are shut out of Christs prayer, *Joh. 17. 9. I pray not for the World.* Gods People are apt to say, Never did any suffer as they: yes, it is worse with the Wicked; their Sins and Sufferings meet together.

10. God in Affliction deals well with his Children, because if he take away one Comfort, he leaves more behind. God threatned *Jerusalem* to strip her of all her Jewels and leave her bare, *Ezek. 16. 39.* But you who belong to God, may Sing of *Mercy and Judgment*, *Psal. 101. 1.* If God hath fleeced your Estate, he hath raised you up Friends: If he hath taken away one of your Jewels, he hath left you more: if he hath pluck'd one dear Relation from you, he hath left other sweet Clusters behind, and can double your Comfort in them: is not all this kindness? But this is our Sin, we grieve more for one Loss, than we are thankful for an Hundred Mercies. *Jacob* was more troubled for the loss of

Q

Joseph

Joseph, than he was Comforted with the Lives of all his other Children, *Gen. 37. 35.*

11. When God Afflicts he deals well with his People, because he takes away nothing from them but he gives them that which is better. What damage can it be to a man to lose his Farthings, and have Gold given him? If God take away Health, he gives Holiness: If he take away a Child, he gives a Christ; is not this better? God takes away a Flower and gives a Jewel.

12. When God Afflicts his Children he deals well with them, because he affords them his Divine presence, *Psalms 91. 15. I will be with him in trouble.* God never Promised us a Charter of Exemption from trouble, but he hath Promised to be with us in trouble. Better be in a Prison and have Gods presence, than on a Throne and want it. Gods presence gives courage, *Act.*

23. 11. When *Polycarp* was near the Theatre and going to Suffer, a Voice came from Heaven, *Be of good cheer O Polycarp.* Was not Christ with the Three Children? did not he go with them

them into the fire? *Dan. 3. 25. I see four men in the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.* He who is the Second Person in the Trinity, made the Fourth Person in the Furnace.

13. God in Afflicting deals well with his Children, because he gives them that which makes amends for their Afflictions; he drops in *the Oyl of Gladness*; he makes them gather *Grapes of Thorns*: *John 16. 22. Your Sorrow shall be turned into Joy.* We see a Godly mans Sufferings, but we know not what Joy he feels: as we hear the roaring of the Sea, but we see not the Gold at the bottom. *Philip Lantgrave* of *Hesse* said, that in his trouble he felt the divine Consolations of the Martyrs: Here was Hony out of the Lion. The Saints have been sometimes so sweetly enlarged, that they had rather endure their Afflictions than want their Comforts, *2 Cor.*

1. 5. As the Sufferings of Christ abound in us: so our Consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* Saint Paul had his Prison-Songs, *Act. 16. 25.* This Bird of Paradise could sing in Winter. God

* *Martyr
in extrema
gaudet,
Tertul.*

turns the *Waters of Marah* into Wine ;
He keeps his Cordials for fainting.
When the Saints taste most of the
Wrath of Men, they shall feel most of
the Love of God : thus the Lord can-
dies his Wormwood with Sugar.

14. When God Corrects his Chil-
dren he deals well with them, because
these Paroxysms or hot trials do not
last long.—*Post nubila Phœbus*—

1 Kin. 11. 39. *I will Afflict the Seed
of David, but not for ever* : God will
love for ever, but not afflict for ever ;
he will ere long give his people a
Writ of ease. A Sinners *best*, and a Saints
worst are but short ; Affliction is cal-
led a *Cup*, Ezek. 23. 32. The Wicked
drink a Sea of Wrath ; the Godly sip
only of the Cup of Affliction, and
God will shortly say, *Transseat Calix,*
Let this Cup pass away from them, Isa.
35. 10. *Sorrow and sighing shall fly away.*
As Affliction hath a Sting to tor-
ment, so it hath a Wing to fly.

15. When God puts his Children
to the School of the Cross, he deals
well with them, because these Afflic-
tions are Manuductions to lead them
to Heaven. *Per crucem ad cælum.* 2 Cor.

4. 17.

4. 17. *Our light Affliction worketh for us a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory.* Upon the dark Colour of Affliction God layes the Golden Colour of Glory. O thou weeping Saint, what a blessed change shalt thou shortly have! Thou shalt change thy Pilgrimage for Paradise: Thou shalt have thy wish. Are riches desirable? thou shalt have *Gates of Pearl*: Is Honour desirable? thou shalt have *white Robes*: Is Pleasure desirable? thou shalt *enter into the Joy of thy Lord*. O think what it will be to be sweetly immersed in the River of Life, and Bathe in the Hony-streams of Gods Love for ever: think what the Beati-fical Vision will be: what it will be to wear a Garland made of the Flowers of Paradise: think what it will be to have the Soul thicker set with Jewels of Glory, than the Firmament is bespangled with Stars: O what a Compensation will this be for all a Christians Tryals! A sight of this bliss will make him forget his Sufferings. One Sun-beam of Glory will dry up the Water of his Tears.

If God deals well with us when he
chasti-

Use.

chastiseth us, then it becomes us to Cherish good Thoughts of God. We are apt in Adversity to think hardly of God; this ariseth from Pride. Such commonly as are of high Spirits are of high Passions; they think themselves better than others, and that they have deserved better at Gods hands, and now Pride vents it self in murmuring. O let us take heed of having hard Thoughts of God. The Patient hath no cause to think ill of the Physician when he prescribes him a bitter Potion, seeing it is in order to a Cure. Gods afflictive Providences are the strokes of a Father, not the Wounds of an Enemy. God smites that he may save. Out of the bitterest Drug God distils his Glory, and our Happiness.

Let us Think well of God; nay, in all adverse Providences let us learn to bless God, *1 Thes. 5. 18. & in every thing give thanks: if in every thing, then, in Affliction;* And good reason, because God deals well with us. *Job* blessed God in Affliction, *cap. 1. 21.* The smiting of *Jobs* Body was like the striking upon a musical Instrument, he sounded forth Thankfulness

ness. A gracious Soul should bless God that he will take so much Notice of him as to Visit him with the Rod *; and is so kind as rather to Afflict him than lose him. This shews an high degree of Grace, not only to *Justifie* God in Affliction, but *Magnifie* him. Believers are Gods *Temples*, and where should his Praises be sounded forth but in his Temples?

F I N I S.
